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# Post-Entry Training for Administration from the Industrial Aspect

By E. S. BYNG, M.I.E.E., F.I.I.A.

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## I.—INTRODUCTION

THIS is a joint conference of representatives of the Civil Service and of business men on a problem of common interest. On occasions of this kind the natural tendency is to dwell upon differences, to emphasise the Civil Service point of view on the one hand and the business point of view on the other. It is important, however, to realise that our differences are secondary, not primary. Administration enters into every kind of co-operative activity. The accompanying diagram (Fig. 1) classifies the main organisations which go to form the complex structure of modern society, and from an analytical study of it, bringing out the similarities of method underlying the diversities of function, two conclusions may be drawn: (1) that administration is an integral factor in all cases, and (2) that the basic principles of administration are of general application. Administration, in short, claims to rank as a science. If this claim is not yet universally recognised, the reason is that problems of administration have usually been handled empirically and more by intuition than through scientific study. A great deal of experience has been gained from a multitude of particular cases, but only during recent years has this mass of miscellaneous data been collated and analysed, bringing to light the universal laws of successful administration.

The question before us is to devise the best procedure for training selected members of our staffs in the theory and practice of administration. Each party has had experience of a particular aspect of the problem and can contribute something towards a sound general solution. The interchange of ideas is facilitated at the outset by the fact that both the Civil Service and business recruit their staff under the broad categories provided by the national educational system. In each case entrants are drawn from the Elementary Schools (with or without some subsequent training of a general or vocational character up to the age of 16), from the Secondary Schools, and from the Public Schools and Universities. Further, both tend in an increasing degree to recruit candidates with some technical training superimposed on their general education. The divergencies which subsequently develop are due in part to differences in function and in part to the independent lines of historical development.

## II.—INDUSTRIAL HISTORY

A distinguishing feature of industrial history is the early adoption and long persistence of the apprenticeship system. It is still adhered to in many skilled trades, and even in those where an alternative method of training is in force the tradition still influences the relations between employers and recruits to the staff. The regulations governing apprenticeship imposed on employers the duty of converting apprentices into skilled craftsmen, and many employers interpreted the obligation in a generous spirit by also concerning themselves in the welfare of the youths under their charge. During the Victorian age, in fact, this concern frequently became actively paternal in character, expressing

# ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGEMENT

exemplified in  
the Life of the Nation  
through

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
<b>*Civil Services.</b>	<b>*Defence Services.</b>	<b>*Local Government Services.</b>	<b>Industrial &amp; Commercial Organisations.</b>	<b>Public Utilities.</b>	<b>Education.</b>	<b>Ecclesiastical and similar Organisations.</b>	<b>Professional Institutions, etc.</b>	<b>Miscellaneous Bodies.</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agriculture and Fisheries.</li> <li>Board of Trade.</li> <li>Colonial Office.</li> <li>Customs and Excise.</li> <li>Domestic and Industrial Research.</li> <li>Education.</li> <li>Foreign Office.</li> <li>Home Office.</li> <li>Inland Revenue.</li> <li>Labour and National Service.</li> <li>Post Office.</li> <li>Transport.</li> <li>Treasury.</li> <li>Works.</li> <li>Etc., etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Naval.</li> <li>Military.</li> <li>Air.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(County and Municipal)</b></li> <li>Education.</li> <li>Fire Brigade.</li> <li>Health.</li> <li>Housing.</li> <li>Museums.</li> <li>Lighting and Power.</li> <li>Markets.</li> <li>Public Buildings.</li> <li>Public Assistance.</li> <li>Public Order (Police, etc.).</li> <li>Roads.</li> <li>Sanitation.</li> <li>Transport.</li> <li>Etc., etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extractive Industries:</li> <li>Agriculture.</li> <li>Fishing.</li> <li>Forestry.</li> <li>Mining and Metallurgical.</li> <li>Manufacturing.</li> <li>Distribution.</li> <li>Wholesale and Retail.</li> <li>Merchandise.</li> <li>Property.</li> <li>Transport:</li> <li>Railways.</li> <li>Shipping.</li> <li>Roads.</li> <li>General Services:</li> <li>Advertising.</li> <li>Building.</li> <li>Entertainment.</li> <li>Hotels.</li> <li>Printing.</li> <li>Press and Publishing.</li> <li>Auxiliary Services:</li> <li>Banking.</li> <li>Insurance.</li> <li>Stockbroking.</li> <li>Industrial and Provident Societies.</li> <li>T. etc.</li> <li>Etc., etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>British Broadcasting Corporation.</li> <li>London Passenger Transport Board.</li> <li>Harbour Boards, such as Port of London Authority.</li> <li>Electricity, Gas and Water Undertakings, other than such as Central Electricity Board.</li> <li>Metropolitan Water Board.</li> <li>Etc., etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Universities and Colleges.</li> <li>Public Schools.</li> <li>Private Schools.</li> <li>Etc., etc.</li> </ul> <p>[ See also under (3) ]</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accounting.</li> <li>Architecture.</li> <li>Engineering:</li> <li>Chemical.</li> <li>Civil.</li> <li>Electrical.</li> <li>Gas.</li> <li>Marine.</li> <li>Mechanical.</li> <li>Mining.</li> <li>Production.</li> <li>Surveying.</li> <li>Structural.</li> <li>Industrial Administration.</li> <li>Journalism.</li> <li>Legal.</li> <li>Medical (incl. Hospitals).</li> <li>Public Administration.</li> <li>Secretarial.</li> <li>Etc., etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Benevolent and Charitable Institutions.</li> <li>British Management Council.</li> <li>Chambers of Commerce.</li> <li>Clubs and Associations.</li> <li>Confederation of Management Associations.</li> <li>Learned and Scientific Societies.</li> <li>Orders and Decorations.</li> <li>Political Parties.</li> <li>Public Trusts.</li> <li>Rotary.</li> <li>Trade Associations.</li> <li>Trade Unions.</li> <li>Youth Movements.</li> <li>Etc., etc.</li> </ul>

[ Post Office is shown under (1) ]

Also the following new Departments:—

- Aircraft.
- Production.
- Economic Warfare.
- Food.
- Power.
- Home Security.
- Information.
- Production.
- Reconstruction.
- Supply.

[ \* (1), (3) and Secretariats for (2) considered as ]

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itself in moral "uplift" as well as in organised arrangements for vocational progress. The motive was by no means wholly economic, since a preoccupation with moral problems was characteristic of the age, but the result was certainly to the economic advantage of both employers and apprentices. It gave the employers a direct personal knowledge of the character and special aptitudes of each employee, and it thus enabled them to select from the ranks of artisans, clerks, or technicians, those who seemed fitted for promotion. Like the method of training, the method of selection was largely empirical. The men chosen were given opportunities of supervising others, or were sent on business journeys, or were encouraged to improve their general or technical education, and in each case the results were noted. By methods of trial-and-error the various managerial posts were filled with greater or less success according to the acumen of the employer and the quality of the personnel available. But, until the beginning of the twentieth century, there was no conception of administration and management as a technique in which men could be trained on the same lines as they studied, say, accountancy or engineering.

With the development, from 1850 onwards, of joint stock enterprise and large-scale methods of production the traditional intimate relations between master and man gradually tended to disappear. Personal methods of controlling selection and training gave way to impersonal methods. This change from the informal to the formal might have been expected to lead to a certain degree of standardisation in aims if not in ways and means, but actually it produced from 1900 onwards a bewildering variety of procedures, some of which were little more than evasions of the problem of executive succession. Many undertakings have relied entirely on their being able to buy supervisory ability in the open market as and when they required it, and they have done little or nothing to contribute a quota to the national supply of trained managerial power. Those which did attempt some constructive effort seldom got beyond some empirical device; they placed young entrants for short periods in each department, hoping they would pick up some of the work, or attached them to subsidiary companies or branches abroad to try out their capacities, or encouraged study at evening classes with the aid of the local education authority. Indeed, some of the more determined students took external degrees through correspondence courses or other means. More progressive firms organised definite schemes of education and training in management under education officers—a type of enterprise conspicuously exemplified by the residential School of Transport established by the London, Midland and Scottish Railway Company in 1938. Some of these developments were of great value, and will be further considered, but the main point to observe is the difficulty of discovering, among the numerous expedients adopted by industry within the last half century for solving the management problem, any clear outline of the course which post-entry training should take. There is a confusion of opinion about the best methods of developing administrators, about the educational strata from which recruits should be drawn, about the respective obligations of the State and the employer in these matters, and, finally, about the fundamental issue whether administration and management can be treated as a basic study or whether men should be trained for administrative or managerial duties specifically related to predetermined conditions.

In short, the business world taken as a whole has not yet found itself on the problem of administration. Ideas are in a rapid state of evolution, and practices are continually being modified according to changing conditions. Therefore the most useful course to follow in the present discussion is to describe the ideals of the more progressive employers, to indicate how far these ideals have been realised, and to consider the bearing of business aims and experience on the problems confronting the Civil Service.

## III.—DEFINITION OF ADMINISTRATION

A definition of the word administration is necessary, partly because popular conceptions on the subject tend to be both vague and various, and partly because of the special use of the term "Administrative Class" in the Civil Service. The specification drawn up many years ago by the French industrialist, Henri Fayol, is now generally accepted; it defined administration as being concerned with six functions—forecasting, planning, organising, commanding, co-ordinating, and controlling. This definition not only confirms the view, already expressed, that administration is a factor in every kind of organised service, public, industrial, or commercial, but it also indicates that some element of administration enters into the work of all ranks engaged in such service. The proportion varies widely over the scale of responsibility, being extremely small in the non-executive ranks and rising to a maximum among the highest officers, some of whom may be engaged almost solely upon administrative duties.

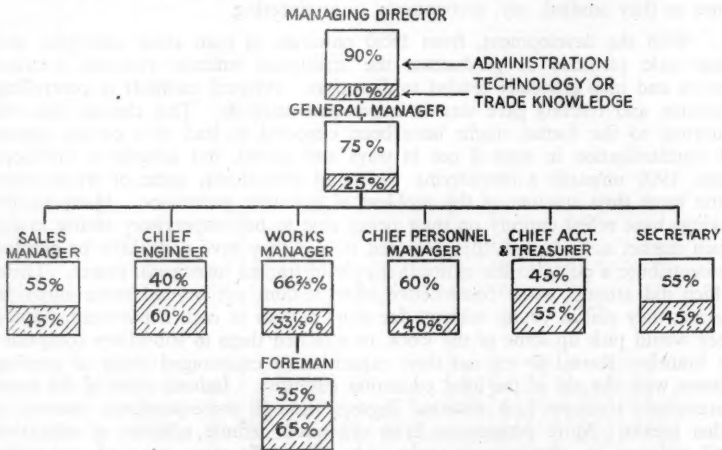


FIG. 2.—Typical Ratios of "Administration" to "Technology"

The above diagram (Fig. 2) illustrates the ratios of administrative to technological activities, ranging from the managing director to the foreman, in an industrial undertaking. The proportions are, of course, only rough approximations, but they may be regarded as broadly typical of industrial concerns. A study of the diagram in the light of Fayol's definition will bring out the fact that in all the grades represented some element of the six functions of the administrator enters into the normal work.

In the case of the Civil Service the conception of administration as a group of specific functions exercised in various degrees by all grades is confused by the formal division of the staff into "administrative," "executive" and "clerical" classes, the first being recruited normally from the universities and the latter two from Secondary and other schools. Entrants to the Administrative class are usually given a short experience in the office and then employed as assistants to principals, being engaged upon such duties as the examination of papers, the collection of material, the drafting of minutes, and so on. Such tasks cannot properly be described as administrative. Moreover, they are carried out in relation to, and under the instructions of, a limited group of superiors and provide insufficient opportunities for learning the art of training and supervising



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groups of subordinates with definite responsibility for results. At the same time the performance of such duties at a desk offers the prospect of promotion in due course to the highest administrative posts. No similar prospect is normally open to their colleagues in the Executive class (any more than there is for Clericals rising into the Executive class), although they, by the nature of their work and their contacts with the public, may acquire a good deal of useful experience in duties which are truly administrative. The civil servant of the Administrative class, with his university status and his superior destiny, has been humourously compared with the queen bee, which originates in a cell of abnormal size, is nourished with the richest food, and attains an exalted maturity in a comparatively brief period!!

During a recent debate\* in the House of Commons on the organisation of the Civil Service the Chancellor of the Exchequer cited, as examples of Departments which had shown themselves ready to accept modern methods of organisation, the Post Office, the Board of Inland Revenue, the Ministry of Labour, and the Scottish Department. It is significant that the first three are conspicuous in the Civil Service both for the number and variety of contacts with the outside world and for the importance and volume of their executive work. The Ministry of Labour and National Service is constantly in touch with the public in the administration of wages boards, joint industrial councils, conciliation machinery, and employment exchanges. As the collector of taxes and the adviser of taxpayers, the Board of Inland Revenue has to maintain direct relations with industry, commerce, and the community in general. The Post Office, in turn, provides what is virtually a daily and direct service to everybody. No one will seek to deprive these Departments of the full credit for adopting modern methods, but it is reasonable to adduce, as one of the causes for their progressiveness, the stimulus derived from the direct impact of public opinion and public demands, and the fact that it is impossible to ignore or to underrate the importance of executive work—that is, of getting things done.

In the case of the Post Office another factor has operated. A decade or so ago the dangers of the traditional system under which appointments at headquarters as Assistant Principal and even Principal could be given to men without any practical knowledge of work in the field began to be fully appreciated. In order to fill this gap in administrative training selected officials were sent into the regions for two or three years to handle executive problems and study public reactions at first hand. The results more than justified the departure from a long-established precedent. Another point to be noted is that the head of the technical staff in the Post Office is himself an engineer-administrator, and furthermore that access is now being given from the technical grades into the administrative class in special cases; two features which might well be followed in some other parts of the Civil Service.

The Chancellor's defence of the Civil Service was supported by a counter-attack on business, which is sometimes held up as a model of progressiveness. He reminded the House that even in the business world the scientific study of questions of organisation and method was comparatively new and that the organised training recommended by the Select Committee on National Expenditure (in their Sixteenth Report) had been adopted, on any scale, in trade and commerce only in recent years. Here the Chancellor was on unassailable ground. There are still many businesses in which systematic management—to use a broadly descriptive phrase—has been applied in only a small degree and more by instinct than by intelligent forethought. On the other hand it is equally true that, since F. W. Taylor first addressed the American Society of Mechanical Engineers on this theme fifty years ago, there has been a revolution in the

\* Hansard, Vol. 386, No. 23, 28th January, 1943, page 690.

organisation and administration of our large-scale business concerns. The fact that the changes in method were often made empirically or merely intuitively does not affect their significance in the present discussion. They took place, and continue to take place, in spite of our characteristic dislike of revolution, and they bear witness to the greater freedom of action and experiment enjoyed by organisations which are privately owned. There is no inherent difference between the personnel engaged in business and that employed by the Civil Service; the essential difference lies in the systems under which the work is carried on. Under the business system a high degree of flexibility is possible; under Government control even a moderate degree is difficult of attainment. The Departments mentioned by Sir Kingsley Wood have proved that the difficulty is not insuperable, and it would seem that one of the most important steps towards overcoming it is to destroy the cleavage between "administrative" and "executive" groups and to enable officers in both grades to acquire understanding and experience of administrative duties. The same arguments apply of course to the Professional, Technical and Scientific grades.

It was, moreover, in the business world that the need for systematic training in administration was first appreciated and that the feasibility of teaching the principles of administration was first demonstrated. On this matter of "teaching administration" there is a good deal of confusion of thought. As the substantives "administration" and "management" are derived from verbs it is often assumed that the claim to be able to teach administration implies a claim to be able to teach anybody to administrate. The real situation, of course, is that while anybody may be instructed in the technique of administration, the ability to apply the technique effectively depends largely upon the aptitudes of the pupil. The combination of mental and temperamental qualities necessary for a high-grade administrator is relatively rare, and the case for training in administration goes no further than the proposition that an individual possessing the necessary qualifications will make a better administrator if he has studied the theory and practice of administration. A corollary of this proposition—and one that is of urgent importance in view of the shortage of men fit for administrative responsibilities—is that every organisation, commercial or otherwise, should pick out the members of its staff who show signs of ability in this direction and should train them thoroughly in the science of administration. Further, since ability of this kind is not necessarily closely correlated with education and may be latent, no section of the staff should be debarred, for reasons of status or service tradition, from the opportunity and benefits of training.

#### IV.—PROFESSIONAL INSTITUTIONS

A good deal of valuable work in promoting education for administration has already been done by various institutions, some of which—like the Institute of Industrial Administration and the Institute of Public Administration—were formed for that specific purpose, while others were established as professional institutions and broadened their curriculum of studies to include administration.

The Institute of Industrial Administration was founded in 1920 to establish standards of knowledge, training, conduct, and experience in the practice of industrial administration; to develop the science and technique of industrial administration, and to promote education and to hold examinations for certificates and diplomas in this subject. The standards in the more advanced examinations were deliberately set at a high level, and additions to membership were restricted for a number of years. It is significant, however, that within the last two years the membership has doubled and that the Institute's standards are now in a fair way to receiving general recognition.

In 1922 a somewhat similar body—the Institute of Public Administration—was formed for the Civil Service and for municipal and other public services.



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Through the medium of lectures, discussions, and an official journal it keeps its members in touch with current practice in all phases of public administration.

During the following year the Institution of Mechanical Engineers took a momentous step by including management in its curriculum of education. A syllabus of management study was prepared and the subject was made compulsory. After ten years the syllabus was revised under the more appropriate title of "Fundamentals of Industrial Administration" and a more advanced syllabus on "Workshop Organisation and Management" was drawn up. This lead was followed in 1933 by the Institution of Electrical Engineers, which adopted for its Graduateship examination a syllabus on the model of the "Fundamentals of Industrial Administration" arranged by the Mechanicals.

There are, in addition, a number of professional organisations which include various aspects of administration and management in their range of activities. The Institution of Production Engineers, which has increased steadily in membership since it was founded in 1921, is now devoting some attention to the administrative side of production engineering technique, and the Incorporated Sales Managers' Association, the Institute of Labour Management, the Office Managers' Association, the Works Managers' Association, and the Purchasing Managers' Association have all given management subjects a place in their examination syllabus. The Institute of Labour Management and the National Institute of Industrial Psychology have done a great deal to stimulate the study of management problems from the personnel aspect which is now coming so much to the fore. In addition to most of the institutions already mentioned, the Industrial Welfare Society, the Institute of Cost and Works Accountants, the Industrial Co-partnership Association and similar bodies hold annual conferences at which these problems are discussed. Close on a quarter of a century ago Mr. B. Seeböhm Rowntree started week-end lecture conferences at Oxford; these were held twice yearly, but were subsequently organised by the Confederation of Management Associations. In 1935 the first International Congress on Scientific Management to be held in this country was organised with the collaboration of the Federation of British Industries.

Apart from the work of these professional bodies there has been a marked increase during the last decade or two in the opportunities for training in administration and management afforded by recognised educational centres. The Manchester College of Technology set up in 1918 a Department of Industrial Administration, and several universities—Dundee, Birmingham, and others—now give degrees on a basis involving, in whole or in part, a knowledge of modern methods of industrial management. Some eighty or more technical colleges are already providing courses in industrial administration on the lines of the "Fundamentals" syllabus of the Institute of Industrial Administration, and some of them cover the full Diploma course of the Institute. During the past twelve months intensive courses in management for foremen have been introduced throughout the country and have proved surprisingly popular.

On the educational side an important development took place in 1930, when the London School of Economics established a Department of Business Administration at the request and with the co-operation of a number of firms and individuals interested in business administration and in the training of men for responsible administrative posts. A one-year course at postgraduate level was arranged. Some of the students were fresh from the universities: others were men selected and seconded by their employers after about three years of practical experience in duties involving some responsibility.

It was found that the students who already possessed some knowledge of business were quick to learn and made useful contributions to the discussion of practical problems. The experiment was very successful, as was evidenced by the active demand for men who had completed the course, and the closing

down of the Department is only a temporary measure due to the war. One question, however, which has not been satisfactorily solved by industrialists and educationists is whether such a course should be regarded as a form of education for post-graduate students or a practical training for men who had already reached the stage of junior officers in business organisations.

#### V.—LIMITATIONS OF EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

This survey of the educational facilities already available suggests that any young man who is genuinely anxious to supplement his business experience with a systematic study of modern management has now the means of doing so. Some firms encourage their entrants to prepare to take an active part in the work of the professional institutions mentioned; others arrange their own training and educational classes or encourage reading courses in management subjects. Further, executive officers of firms belonging to Management Research Groups have the advantage of organised exchanges of ideas and experience. Still another medium of study is afforded by the type of refresher course in management successfully promoted by the Sheffield Centre of the Institute of Industrial Administration. Nevertheless, these facilities, numerous and varied as they are, do not fully meet the needs of the present day. Experience acquired during the war has demonstrated that efficient management is the scarcest commodity of all, and also indicates that far too few have taken advantage of what facilities have been available. The dearth of trained administrators may well prove to be one of the severest drawbacks to the country's post-war development. It must be recognised that an exceptional degree of energy and will power is needed to undertake management training on the top of a full day's work. Save in a few noteworthy cases, systematic training in management for all who enter industry of the right mental calibre is far less developed than it ought to be or as it is in, say, the Fighting Services.

Moreover, and this is a point of cardinal importance, practically all the systems of training so far described are designed for men under the age of 28 or 30. That is to say none of them, apart from the final examinations of the Institute of Industrial Administration, is intended to provide more than the knowledge and understanding required by a man who aspires to be an assistant manager or at most the manager of a department. To use the analogy of the Fighting Services again, business has made fairly adequate arrangements for the elementary vocational training of officers, for instructional courses in other branches of the Services, and for qualifying examinations up to the rank of captain. No provision, however, has yet been made by business—with the single exception just indicated—for later training of those destined for the higher ranks, the generals of our industrial army; in the Services this is afforded by the Junior and the Senior Staff Colleges and by the Imperial Defence College.

The business world, therefore, is faced with the problem of filling this gap in its system of training.

#### VI.—NATIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF COLLEGE

Some years have passed since Major L. Urwick, speaking at one of the Oxford Management Conferences, urged the formation of a residential Staff College as the most efficient solution of this problem. While the feasibility of his proposal was not seriously disputed, its novelty induced a cautious approach, and in the absence of any general active demand for higher education in administration the project was allowed to drift. Since the outbreak of war, however, the acute scarcity of well-trained administrators has given the matter a fresh urgency, and there is a much more widespread tendency to welcome a definite scheme and to consider it in a spirit of constructive criticism.

## POST-ENTRY TRAINING FROM THE INDUSTRIAL ASPECT

A group of business men and others interested in the development of administrative talent have outlined the organisation for a National Administrative Staff College with the specific object of giving selected students of between 28 and 35 years of age an intensive course of training in higher administration. The proposed curriculum is confined to the fundamental principles of sound administration and lays emphasis on the responsibilities of leadership and the importance of correct practice in the forecasting, planning, organising, commanding, co-ordinating, and controlling functions, the exercise of which is the prerogative of the administrator. The subjects covered by ordinary commercial training are excluded. The staff suggested would consist of a principal and a number of lecturers and tutors chosen for their practical knowledge of the various aspects of higher administration and for their teaching capacity. Considerable use would also be made of visiting lecturers drawn from the ranks of responsible leaders in industry and other services. The intention is that the full course shall extend over five months and that not more than about one-quarter of the period shall be devoted to formal instruction, the remainder being occupied with discussions and practical exercises directed to testing powers of exposition, of investigating problems and drawing up reports, selecting candidates for given positions, and so on. Visits to representative types of undertaking will also be arranged. The fees proposed are about £150 for the complete course, including living expenses and tuition. The general direction of the College and the control of funds are to be vested in a Court of Governors, unpaid, and the internal administration will be in the hands of a President and Principal appointed by the Governors. Capital will be provided by subscription and, while the fees are calculated to cover the running expenses, the College will not be run for profit.

The group responsible for this proposal claims that among the two hundred and fifty leading people consulted—embracing members of the Government and of both Houses of Parliament and representatives of industry and commerce (including the trades unions), the fighting Services, the Civil Service, Local Government, and the universities—all but a few expressed enthusiastic approval. The group is also confident that funds sufficient to found the College will be obtainable from industry and commerce alone, although it is hoped that other organisations will contribute.

Here, therefore, we have a definite scheme for meeting what has become an urgent national need. It raises two questions: firstly, whether as a whole it meets the need: secondly, whether the machinery as specified is capable of improvement. The first question, which concerns a matter of principle, is clearly the one which can be most fruitfully dealt with at the present time. If agreement can be reached on the general issue of a Staff College devoted to administrative studies, the details of organisation can safely be left for later consideration.

The outstanding feature of the scheme—and, indeed, of the basic idea of a Staff College—is that it is highly selective. By deliberate intention only those who have shown themselves likely to qualify for the higher grades of administrative responsibility will be considered as suitable students regardless of whether they come through the accounting, commercial, engineering, or other technical departments. Prospects of success depend upon the strict observance of this principle of selection, since it is only men with the appropriate capacities and with a background of business experience who can benefit from intensive training and make the expenditure of time and energy worth while for themselves and their employers. In many organisations it should be possible for the directors to nominate suitable members of their staffs, but as factors other than administrative capacity may enter into this method of choice, a more objective mode of selection may be recommended as a check on nominations. Modern technique

in tests of aptitudes and temperament has proved itself a definite aid in overcoming the difficulties of selection; it is not infallible, but it provides a valuable measure of insurance against mistakes and should not be neglected in the important matter of selecting the entrants to a Staff College of this type. In this connection it is worth noting that Yale University accepts only those students who, besides having reached a certain scholastic standard, have been proved by tests to be likely to benefit by the classes they propose to attend.

The vital point, as regards a National Administrative Staff College, is that a general recommendation by employers or mere ability to pay the fees should not be sufficient to secure admission. Selection for the College should be an exacting process, and the privilege of entering should be regarded as both a high distinction in itself and a guarantee of potentialities adequate for leadership in industry or the public service.

It is therefore an essential condition of efficiency that the College should operate at a high educational level, though this should not imply any favour to the privileged or to any particular academic background; the standard postulated is one derived from life rather than from books. It implies also that the curriculum will be concerned with the broad administrative problems which are common not only to all kinds of industry and commerce but to the public services as well. In the same way a military staff college deals with principles of strategy and organisation which embrace the numerous and diverse sections of the Fighting and Auxiliary Services. Thus a proposal for an Administrative Staff College on what we may call the strategic level raises the question whether its entrants should be limited to industry and commerce or should include officials in the Civil, Municipal, and other public services. Opinions differ on this issue, some people maintaining that all types of organisation have an equal interest in the science of administration, while others argue that public service organisation is so radically different from business organisation that it calls for an entirely separate educational institution.

No one denies that the Civil Service has administrative problems of its own. On the other hand, no expert in administration will admit that these special problems should be approached otherwise than in the light of the basic principles of the science of administration. It may be noted, further, that no opposition to the idea of a joint—or, rather, an all-inclusive—Staff College of Administration comes from the business side. Industrialists and business men in general are ready, if not anxious, that picked men from the Civil Service should study together with picked men from their own ranks. They feel that an exchange of views between the two groups would be helpful to both, and that the very differences in conditions and in the ways of adaptation to special circumstances tend to broaden outlook and stimulate administrative ingenuity. They are also aware that, with the growth of large-scale organisations and the advent of quasi-public corporations controlling services previously rendered by private enterprise, the differences between business and public service are not so definite as they used to be. Moreover, they realise that with the development of planning and control in all sorts of directions the relations between the business world and Government Departments are becoming even more intimate and complex as time goes on. Therefore they incline strongly to the view that much is to be gained by bringing the future administrators of both worlds together during a critical part of their training.

The broader policy is supported by the Select Committee on National Expenditure in their sixteenth report on the organisation and control of the Civil Service. While a specifically Civil Service staff college for post-entry training is recommended, the syllabus outlined includes, in addition to courses in public administration, the study of modern developments in trade and industry, economics, social services, etc. Further, the courses "should be practical as

## POST-ENTRY TRAINING FROM THE INDUSTRIAL ASPECT

well as theoretical, *i.e.*, they should bring the civil servant into visual contact with commerce and industry and with the work of local authorities, public utility companies, social services, etc. . . ." Such a syllabus could effectively be carried out only if the Civil Service Staff College included students from commerce and industry. Indeed, it might be a national tragedy if the Civil Service established its own Staff College and thus tended to widen rather than to bridge the differences between itself and the rest of the community.

The reluctance shown in certain quarters to bring all types of administrators into training at a National Staff College may be due in part to a misconception of the function of the College. Its true function is not to instruct members of the Civil Service in methods of Civil Service administration but to provide an intensive training in administration to a small proportion of members in preparation for the most responsible administrative posts. A Staff College, in short, is a selective institution operating on a high level for a narrowly defined purpose, and both its purpose and its methods of operation are as equally applicable to industry, commerce, and public utilities, as to the Civil Service.

The establishment of such a college for the benefit, exclusive or otherwise, of the Civil Service would not, however, in any way preclude the organisation of a system of training civil servants, during their earlier years of employment, in the administrative and other phases of their work. A great deal of benefit might be derived from instruction at this period in the broader aspects of Civil Service procedure, of the functions of the various departments, and of the relations among the departments and between the Civil Service, the Government, and the public in general. Such instruction would form an integral part of the reforms urged by Mr. W. J. Brown in the course of the debate in the House of Commons on the report of the Select Committee. The first thing to be done, he said, was to provide classes within the department—in accountancy, in audit work, in clerical work, in typing and shorthand, and the rest—so that each individual should develop his true bent. The second stage is to provide education in the work of the particular department, so that the individual can understand the relations between his own little function and the functions of the department as a whole. And he suggested a third stage—that of education in association with the outside world.

There is much to be said in favour of these recommendations. If intelligently carried out they would certainly raise the general efficiency of all grades, but whatever may be said for them, they do not in any way form the basis of a Staff College as the Select Committee, and experts in administration generally, conceive it. Their author himself is opposed to a Staff College; before it is considered he wants measures adopted to get the best out of all ranks in the Civil Service. In this latter respect he may be in much the same position as those who quite rightly advocate vocational staff training, but who have in mind a curriculum and an aim more akin to those of his scheme than to those of a Staff College for Administration. An outstanding example of this type of training is the Hendon Police College; although not a staff college in the ordinary interpretation of the term but more of a cadet college, the results have been very satisfactory. Those who passed successfully through the college gained inspector's rank on leaving, and the majority have amply justified both their selection and the lines on which the college was conducted. Unfortunately the college had to be closed for the period of the war because neither instructors nor students could be spared to attend, but it is believed there is every intention of re-opening when conditions become normal.

After agreement on the broad lines for a National Administrative Staff College has been reached, the question of finance should not give rise to much debate or difficulty. The scheme prepared by the group already referred to is calculated to be self-supporting so far as running expenses are concerned, and



the initial cost is to be met by subscription. Co-operation at the outset with the Civil Service would involve a re-arrangement of the organisation and the finances, but there are plenty of precedents for joint educational activities by the Government and business interests, where the Board of Education exercises its powers of giving grants in aid, or for a project of this importance the model of a public corporation is not inappropriate. The present attitude of the country, from the Government downwards, towards educational developments is extremely favourable, and a well-planned scheme for a Staff College should have little trouble in securing effective backing and a sympathetic reception. As Sir John Wardlaw-Milne said in the House of Commons, when introducing the report of the Select Committee, "the whole object of the report is to try to secure efficiency in the performance of the tremendous task which the Civil Service has to undertake. . . ." and efficiency is the true economy in the expenditure of money and effort.

The same argument is likely to influence the employer, whether public or private, when he is asked to release a valued member of his staff for several months and to contribute to his maintenance at a Staff College. The expense, direct and indirect, is to be reckoned as an investment which returns dividends in the form of higher efficiency, alike of the individual concerned and of all the men and departments he may have to control in the future. Business men who are confronted with the almost insoluble problem of finding, among their thousands of employees, two or three who are capable of senior administrative work, will regard the transient cost of a course at a Staff College as a small price for being spared similar embarrassment in the future. As for the disturbance of staff arrangements involved in detaching officers for Staff College training, the experience which most business men have had during the war of the requisitioning of key men will make the necessary adjustment a simple matter of routine.

The question of the location of a National Administrative Staff College is one on which various points of view are advanced. Some consider that a large house quietly buried in the country makes an ideal centre for intensive study; others feel that rural isolation, while pleasant enough for a short period, becomes irksome when imposed for several weeks or months without interruption. They discover many advantages in proximity to a town—and particularly a university town—where the general atmosphere is favourable to mental concentration but has its elements of recreation and social contact.

## VII.—CONCLUSION

The general argument advanced above is that a National Administrative Staff College is one of the most necessary factors in the development of post-entry training in administration; that the College should be open to suitable men from all types of organisation, and that its efforts should be specifically directed to training men for the high administrative posts which are at present so difficult to fill.

In considering this argument it should be borne in mind that the idea of such a Staff College was brought forward about twenty years ago, and that the discussion it aroused has only served to strengthen the case for completing our facilities for training in administration by adopting the model so successfully developed in the Fighting Services. Our present methods of securing competent administrators in the highest ranks are haphazard to a degree which is in glaring contrast to the established practice in all other professions. The situation is one in which some recent words by Sir George Schuster may be fitly applied:—"We must not resort to our old habit of muddling along. . . . Our task is to

ensure that our natural dislike for anticipating difficulties or ambitious planning does not leave us unorganised and unprepared for the difficulties we have to face. We do not need rigid control or detailed plans for a future we cannot exactly foresee, but a clear ideal backed by a form of organisation and a spirit of free generous co-operation which will keep us flexible and fit to meet any problems or difficulties that may come upon us. . . ."

## The Education of the Civil Servant

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### I

PERHAPS the most important duty of anyone who comments to-day upon questions of public significance is to make plain beyond misunderstanding the assumptions upon which his comments are made. All of us are in danger, in a period of national unity, of agreeing to use the same words while agreeing that they are not to mean the same thing. No one can seriously discuss the education of the civil servant except in the context of a pretty definite idea of the functions he is to perform. He needs one kind of education if he is to be a civil servant, or, at least, a successful civil servant, under Hitler. He must learn to believe that Hitler is the greatest German in history, that Jews are the root of all evil, that Alfred Rosenberg is an important social philosopher, and that the only sin a nation can commit is to be defeated. But anyone who is to be an official in Britain in the post-war period will have other lessons to learn.

What those lessons are depends upon the view one takes of two things. There is, first, the kind of future we want to shape for Britain, if we can; and there is, second, the adaptations and changes the push towards that future involves in the inherited pattern of governmental organisation. I frankly start from the conviction that this war is a revolution which is digging deep into the very foundations of our society; and I believe, further, that, like all revolutions, it has shown how fragile and inadequate are many things we had previously believed to be strong and satisfactory. Among the latter, if I may say so, are many of our traditional notions about the British Civil Service—I, certainly, am no longer able to believe that the kind of official we shall want after the war is, technical experts apart, most likely to be produced solely by the method of open competitive examination. I have become convinced that our methods of administration produce, above all at the apex of the departmental pyramid, a race of officials who have sacrificed experimentalism and audacity for soundness and the desire to be thought a "safe" man. I think our Civil Service has never really faced the problem of how to get rid of its misfits, and that these are far more numerous than we should care to admit. I think it brings officials to really responsible work too late, and that they have been far better acquainted with a scheme on paper than with the men to whom the scheme is to apply. I am confident that most heads of departments whom I have known have prided themselves on their capacity for political neutrality; on which I observe, first, that, in a large way, this capacity has never been

tested, and that in fact the capacity was really nothing more than the deposit of a long process of being trained to suppress the premisses of their thought. I am, moreover, pretty certain that there is, below the administrative grade, a good deal of first-rate ability which is never discovered, is, therefore, discouraged relatively early, and spends long years in routine performance because it lives in a permanent sense of frustration. I believe that the Service has, perhaps only half-consciously, not seldom confused address with ability. I suspect that a good deal more use ought to have been made than has been made of men and women who spend a few years only in the Service, or are brought in to do a particular piece of work. I suspect that the predominating position of the Treasury in our system has exercised a pre-natal control of ideas in other departments which has had expensive consequences. And I believe that far too few of our officials have had any real knowledge of foreign experience, or even deemed it necessary to acquire that knowledge. And I do not think that any historic survey of the relations between Whitehall and the local authorities could fail to emphasise how much the nation has lost because there was so small an interchange of officials between the centre and the circumference, so little real understanding of each other's problems that was not almost wholly external in character.

I dare not, tempting though it is, seek to document my heresies; but at least I may perhaps translate them into a comprehensive generalisation. Our Civil Service, national and local, has been a typical expression of the compromise between capitalism and democracy which is the outcome of the last century or so of our history. Its merits have been important and obvious. Since somewhere about the time of the Philosophic Radicals, it has been, on the whole, inaccessible to corruption; and no one who has seen other Civil Services in the same period is likely to belittle the importance of that quality. While it has scarcely, I think, been an imaginative service, the level of its efficiency seems to compare favourably with that of any other country. There are, moreover, certain special spheres of its activities in which its achievement has set the standard by which all related effort must be judged; I do not think it would be possible to overpraise the work of Sir John Simon on the public health side of local, or of Sir Robert Morant on the educational side of the central, government. Each of them marked an epoch in his field comparable in its importance with that of Rousseau or Bentham in the area of social philosophy.

And yet I think that the historian who, several centuries from now, estimates the seventy-five years since Gladstone's historic Order in Council, while he will register notable improvement, will register also a certain disappointment. He will, I think, say that while our administrators were accurate, energetic, devoid of the worst evils of bureaucracy, inaccessible to corruption, they suffered from two grave defects—the first was their unwillingness to force the pace of reforms which they knew to be urgent—workmen's compensation, for example, or town-planning, or education. The second was that they set the limits of the practicable far lower than was necessary. They assumed that things were impossible or undesirable not because the facts plainly showed that they were so; they assumed it, partly because they did not think it necessary to discover the facts, and partly because they accepted a pattern of social organisation which implied the permanent validity of bourgeois civilisation. That is, I suggest, clear in most of the matters concerned with our educational system; it is clear in the major part of the services connected with health and poverty; not least, it is the vital clue to the Treasury attitude to financial experiment. It was not merely Mr. Gladstone who was Oxford on top and Liverpool underneath; a very comfortable Liverpool, I add, which was dis-



mayed, as Macaulay was dismayed, by Dickens' *Hard Times*, and mainly knew the work of Marx and Engels as something it was unnecessary to read because the academic economists had already answered them.

I know, of course, the answer that civil servants are quick to make to this criticism. Policy, they say, is the affair of ministers; their task is the humbler one of advising, with appropriate impartiality, upon the probable consequences of their choice. I am not, I fear, able to accept the answer as adequate. For, in the first place, the number of ministers in any cabinet who have really made up their minds what policy they want to adopt is pretty small; most of them accept, without reforming, a departmental tradition which is already shaped for their inheritance. That is why, if I may say so, within a brief period of leaving office, it is so difficult to associate any minister with a particular line of policy. And, in the second place, our system, especially since the Liberal government of 1906, has been built upon a co-operation between a ministerial amateur and a corps of administrative specialists in which it takes a very determined man to move outside the pattern of action which has been traced for him in the department. And, in the third place, no one who has seen the collaboration of the higher Civil Service and ministers at first hand will be inclined, except in service to a theory, to argue that it is adequately described as a relation between a superior and his subordinates. Ministers, no doubt, have the final word; but that finality is the outcome of a complex process in which the relevant influences are both too numerous and too intricate to be described by a single category. In pure constitutional principle, no doubt, Sir Eyre Crowe took his orders from Lord Grey; but I do not think any careful student of Sir Eyre Crowe's remarkable memoranda would accept the constitutional principle as a final summary of their relationship.

What I seek to persuade you to accept is the argument that our political rulers in the last seventy-five years built a system which was still, in September, 1939, mainly living as the residuary legatee of the spiritual and intellectual capital bequeathed by Bentham to the Victorian age. His assumption was that the State intervened where the actions of individuals were clearly inadequate; and that intervention was the outcome of a complicated network of influences in which it was not even remotely true that each citizen "counted as one and not more than one." The ruling ideas of the Civil Service were a body of principles which roughly assumed that Marshall had said the last word in economic doctrine, and of which the immanent political philosophy was a modified Hegelianism. The presence of eccentric ideas was rare in the field with which legislation dealt; the search, rather, was for safety and soundness as these were conceived by that powerful combination of landed aristocracy, professional men, and industrialists, who have ruled Britain since 1832.

Its traditional state-wisdom has been very great; that there was no English Revolution in the nineteenth century is sufficient proof of that. And it moulded its administrators to a pattern which rarely doubted that this traditional state-wisdom was a permanent formula of action. Until something like the period of the first Labour Government those who doubted its permanence even among the working-class were rare; it is significant that there has been no English revolutionary figure since the period of Chartism, and that most Labour ministers fulfilled the Civil Service ideal of seeing most of the difficulties in the way of action even before they were embodied in memoranda for their consumption. Until the outbreak of war, in September, 1939, it was pardonable for almost any citizen to accept the illusion that this formula was permanent. With London still the financial centre of the world; with vast foreign investments; with an Empire in

which the spectres of nationalism and native trade unions were hardly beginning to rear their heads; with citizens so accustomed to the rule of law that, even in war-time, hardly a ripple was caused in Parliament by the fact that there was one scale of allowance for a soldier's wife, a second for the wife of an industrial trainee, a third for the wife of a man who is both insured and unemployed, and nothing for the wife of a man on sick benefit; and hardly a ripple has been caused by the fact that there are eight separate scales of children's allowances, and no allowance if the father is sick or disabled. We have been a very fortunate people in the ease with which the traditional respect for Whitehall has enabled us to impose different conceptions of the proper safeguard against poverty upon people whose needs were uniform.

Fifty years ago Engels predicted that the Victorian compromise would break down when British economic predominance came to its close. That is what has now occurred. But there seems to me no sign of a common agreement upon what is to take its place. Everyone can see that, whatever our personal predilections, we have moved into an age of planning; but for whom we are to plan, and for what, is really the central question we have to decide. And from this it seems to me logically to follow that the education of the civil servant will depend upon our answer to the question. Are we to plan for mass well-being? Are we to assume the maintenance of something like the traditional pattern of our society with the rich, perhaps, paying, as taxation, a higher ransom to the poor? Are we learning that our religion of inequality is now an anachronism, and that those who worship at its altars are the enemies of democracy? Have we learned the vital lesson which it is clear from *Little Dorrit* that Dickens knew well, that representative government is by no means the same thing as popular government? On the plane of immediate action, have our rulers realised that, when the war is over, we shall be a very fatigued nation, and that fatigue is the supreme opportunity of which vested interests take advantage?

You will not expect me here to answer these immense questions. I raise them only to make what seems to me the important point that the training of the official will not be conducted in a vacuum, but will be an adjustment to an actual body of experienced and very practical needs. It is, I think, essential for us to think of the civil servant, whether he is working in Whitehall or in Whitehaven, as a concrete human being specialising, not in omniscience, but in the art of satisfying as best he can a body of demands which are only part of a greater whole which seeks for satisfaction. And this concrete human being must learn from the outset of his career that the test of his work is exactly his ability, whether in agriculture, or the army, whether among the unemployed or the old-age pensioners, to maintain the faith, among the men and women he has to satisfy, that the power of government is exercised for their benefit as individuals, finite, concrete, unique. The power of government is not legitimated because it makes those who operate it inspire awe or fear among citizens, or because, while it elevates the authority of the State, it depresses the stature of human beings. The business of government, quite simply, is to satisfy demand on the largest possible scale, and, assuming the validity of the democratic idea, to satisfy demand whether it come from Jew or Greek, black man, or white man, brown man or yellow man. And, again assuming the validity of the democratic idea, the business of government is to recognise that no demand is entitled to a different response unless it can be shown that the difference brings an advantage, on a long-term view, to those whose immediate satisfaction is upon a lower scale. The experience of soldiers' dependants, in the estimation of their allowances, is at least as valid as that of the War Office or the

Treasury. And this is to say, with what emphasis I can bring, that about the most important qualities of which the official has need, the qualities we must seek to train, are imagination and humility.

## II

I apologise for so long a preamble; I hope that the sequel will prove that it was necessary to my argument. Implied in it, of course, is the view that the ambit of demand we have sought to satisfy is smaller than is warranted by the claims of a democratic society. It is in the context of those claims that I propose to set my sequel; and it is because of them that I have postulated imagination and humility as the two qualities the administrator most urgently needs. I emphasise the first because of my conviction that no administrator can be successful unless he can see a problem in terms of the premisses of other people; as the general tries to see the plan of battle in terms of his enemy's purposes. I emphasise the second because I am anxious that the administrator may start from the recognition that those over whom he exercises control may well be right and he wrong; there is an inescapable truth, not always welcome to officials, in Aristotle's great dictum that those who eat a dinner are better judges of its quality than the cook who has prepared it.

Obviously, the tasks of administration, central and local, are at different levels, and I take it that the main method of distinguishing them is by the degree of responsibility which attaches to the completed task. But post-entry training, in my submission, must start from two assumptions. First, it must be so planned that, granted suitability of age, officials in the lowest grade are not, *a priori*, excluded from access to the highest; in this regard, it is my own belief that the steepness of the ascent in our national Civil Service has done great harm. Second, it must be so planned that it conveys a sense of the relationship between the training given, and the general purposes of the government. An official cannot, to take an obvious example, be trained as a diplomat without at least making the acquaintance of history, politics and economics. The danger we have always to guard against is the twofold one, first, that width of view is sacrificed to intensity of gaze, and, second, that the training is devoid of that mingling with one's fellow-men which has made the policeman and the postman probably the most popular officials in this country.

On this basis, I would like to begin by questioning whether we are wise in assuming that entrants into the national Civil Service are, for the most part, graded pretty permanently at the time of their entry. I am not in the least sure that an assistant-principal, who goes directly from Eton and King's to an apprenticeship to a principal in the Foreign Office, learns as much as he could learn if he spent a few months in the consulate of a busy capital trying as best he could to deal with the ceaseless flow of questions. Is it not at least possible that when we cut off a large part of the junior administrative grade from any contact save with other officials that we separate them, at just the wrong period, from one of the most essential parts of their art, the ability to live with people and to understand their problems? Certainly I hold the view strongly that one has to have the good fortune to become a Minister's private secretary, or to hold the same post under the permanent secretary of a department to get the training a clever young official can get out of the experience of being an inspector of taxes or a committee clerk in a local authority. My own view, therefore, is that any training which buries the beginner in papers and cuts him off from contact with the public is a grievous error. The earlier the administrator learns the art of explaining the rules he has to enforce to ordinary men and women the wiser he is likely to be when he comes to exercise serious responsibility.

The civil servant, local or national, is on entry one of two types : the special administrator, the doctor, for instance, the engineer, or the physicist, or the general administrator of different grades. Now while I agree that the second type can rarely do the work of the first, I am anxious that we should at least be prepared to assume that the first can do the work of the second. I am myself convinced, from long experience now of municipal government, that the medical officer of health who can run his department really well will make as good a town clerk as a good lawyer ; and I would not have hesitated to make Sir John Simon the permanent secretary of the Ministry of Health had that post existed in his day. I have become convinced that the subordination of the specialist to the general administrator, which is characteristic of our organisation, is a profound mistake. Among all specialists there is a number, no doubt small, of heaven-born administrators ; it seems to me important that we should lay our plans to discover them as early as possible. I agree that the number will be small. But that peculiar synthesis of character and intelligence which gives men like Sir Robert Morant their unique driving-power is on any showing rare. We ought to neglect no opportunity of finding it when it exists.

This leads me to make one remark that is not, perhaps, strictly relevant to my theme. I believe that administration suffers, both centrally and locally, from an excessively hierarchical structure. Policy is too much canalised into a single stream ; there is not enough consideration, at the level of final decision, of possible alternatives. Civil administration is not, after all, like a naval battle in which conflicting strategies may be fatal to the outcome. I note a remark, which epitomises this attitude, in Mr. Dale's recent book on the Higher Civil Service ; he does not think a permanent secretary would willingly agree that his political chief should hear representations against the policy urged upon him from the permanent secretary's subordinates except when he is present ; otherwise, he thinks, the permanent secretary is bound to fear a loss of influence and authority. Mr. Dale writes of these relationships almost as though the first duty of a great official is, not to see that the minister has the full evidence before him when he makes his choice, but, in the Oriental phrase, not " to lose face."

I believe, on the contrary, two things. First, wherever the general administrator, for whatever reason, overrules the scientific experts, the latter should, if they so desire, have the opportunity to make their case to the Minister. For not only is it unlikely that the argument for a proposal that is to be rejected likely to be as well made by those who propose to reject it as by those who believe in it ; I think, also, that the existing method results in a frustration which may easily become general as well as specific. And I am confident that nothing does more harm to a subordinate official, especially a junior official, if he must always make his case in the presence of his superior, in whose hands his future largely lies. It is not easy for him to be at his best ; if the matter is of first-class importance he may have to pay for being at his best, not least if he is successful. I know that few things do more towards creativeness in academic life than the fact that a junior lecturer is the master of his own utterance. And it would be intolerable if a junior lecturer, especially if he differed from his professor on some matter of fundamental doctrine, had to take a joint seminar with him on the understanding that, whatever the run of the argument, it was the professor's ideas which the class had ultimately to accept. I am sure that one of the reasons why Lord Haldane was a great Secretary of War was the fact that he kept open house for soldiers, from the youngest second-lieutenant to the most eminent field-marshal. And I am sure that one of the reasons he accomplished so much, in so short a space of time, was the fact

that he ignored the hierarchical principle in securing materials upon which to form his own judgment. It is well known, too, that Mr. Lloyd George did the same thing in the last war; and it was his insistence in going behind the facade of protocol which was largely responsible for his acquisition of the insights through which he organised the victory of 1918.

Let us assume that we have got in some department a young man or a young woman who shows first-rate promise as an administrator. What kind of post-entry training are we to provide? Let me begin by saying, first, that if the official is in one of the lower grades of the hierarchy, a clerical officer, for example, the wisest step to take is leave of absence to complete an educational training. I do not argue for one moment that there is any direct correlation between administrative aptitude and education; that is shown by innumerable political and industrial careers, not least that of a great administrator like Mr. Arthur Henderson. But I do expect that, up to some such age as twenty-three or twenty-four, a university training gives all but the most extraordinary minds a flexibility and a power of criticising foundations not easily available in any other way. A university will do little or nothing for the young Lincoln, perhaps even nothing for the young Lloyd George. But I do with all my heart believe that, the genius for whom we can make no rules apart, the three or four years of leisured discussion which a university provides can rarely be replaced by any alternative.

We are mostly, however, concerned with officials who are twenty-five and over. What form should their post-entry training take? The fashionable thing of the moment is the idea of a staff college, comparable to Camberley or the Imperial Defence College, in which administration is taught on lines parallel to those in the defence services. I must say at once that I think such an idea a wholly mistaken one if it is to be confined to civil servants, local or central, with a staff whose main business is the training of officials. I take this view on several grounds. First, I think it is a grave error of judgment to segregate officials from the rest of the population. Second, as it seems to me, the standards of such a body need to be continually renewed by being tested in the light of external criteria. Third, I think teachers whose activities were confined, either mainly or wholly, to the teaching of civil servants would tend to become narrow in their interests and limited in their vision. What gives its salt to university life is the width of the horizons it has to scan, the variety in the outlook of its teachers, the need, in its students, to test the values at which they have provisionally arrived against other values born of contact with a different experience or a different discipline. All this would largely be absent from a Civil Service staff college in the technical sense; and nothing, I think, could compensate for its absence. Insofar as it was a purely professional institution, it would, I suspect, rapidly degenerate into a kind of superior business college; insofar as it sought to be more than purely professional it would be an inadequate substitute for a university without the qualities by which the latter compensates for its patent deficiencies.

My view, therefore, is that post-entry training ought to take the form of a year or two years in a university in which the education provided was of two kinds. In part, it would utilise the normal facilities a university provides; I should like to think, to take an obvious example, that the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ceylon, my former colleague Dr. W. I. Jennings, taught constitutional and administrative law not merely to future solicitors at the London School of Economics, but to budding legal advisers in the departments. In part, post-entry training would need to organise special facilities for its students. Some of these, as, notably, the comparative study of public administration, could be undertaken by the university



itself. Others would require the co-operation of specialists from outside : I have, for example, always cherished the notion that men like Lord Hankey and Mr. Thomas Jones would make their unique experience available to new generations of civil servants by reflecting aloud on its meaning, and submitting themselves to cross-examination. I have even thought that ministers and ex-ministers would give up an occasional evening for the same purpose. Certainly I think all my colleagues who were present would say that the night in 1926 when Mr. Churchill dined with a dozen of us at the School of Economics, and we fought a battle royal over the Samuel Report on the Coal Industry, and the perhaps consequential general strike, was one of the most memorable they have ever spent.

To training of this more or less academic kind, in the course of which I think it would emerge that the art of administration can be envisaged as a body of principles suitable for intellectual analysis, I would add three other things. The official, in his capacity as student, needs to see some of the institutions with which he has peripheral contact ; it is curious to reflect how few civil servants have seen Parliament or the Courts at work, how many fewer, if they belong to Whitehall, have attended the sittings of a local authority, not least in its committees. There ought to be contact with the meetings of trade unions and employers associations ; there is all the difference in the world between reading a report of the Trades Union Congress in *The Times* and actually attending its sessions. And each official ought to be given a problem at which to work on which he produces a report of considerable size. It ought to involve the collection of material, the handling of statistics, and a proposal for administrative, and, where necessary, legislative action. And if it is possible to take two years over training of this kind, I should like the official from Whitehall to spend three months in the offices of a local authority, and the official from the local authority to spend three months in Whitehall. If the captaincy of the Hampshire Volunteers was not entirely useless to the historian of the Roman empire, I venture to suggest that the clerkship to the London County Council has not been without its value to the Permanent Secretary of the Colonial Office.

What I have so far said envisages the position of the younger civil servant and has not assumed a wide extension of the functions of the State. I have not myself any sort of doubt that this extension is inevitable, and that it is going to involve the recruitment of officials of a different type from those to whom we have grown accustomed in a predominantly private economy. If the government of to-morrow is to run—as I think and hope it will run—enterprises in which its servants may be directing an air-line or building houses or mining coal or running a farm, it is pretty obvious that it will have to think of post-entry training in different terms from those to which it has been mainly, at any rate, so far accustomed. The functions of the administrator who is running an air-line are not, in my view, comparable with the functions of an administrator who looks, let us say, to the permanent secretaryship of the Home Office as the crown of his career. Yet I venture to think that, properly understood, the qualities called into play by both types of administration are not really dissimilar. The capacity to judge men, insight into essentials, the power to see the future pattern in the present frame of things, the art of leading a team so that the co-operation brings out the best each member can give, these are, I suggest, the qualities common to both types of work. Not only is this so : it seems to me at least dubious whether the positive state in the epoch we have now entered can adequately fulfil its end unless both types of administrator understand sympathetically each other's tasks. That they do so adequately to-day could not, I think, be regarded as generally true. That they

must do so if they are to meet the problems they will in fact confront increasingly in common I take for granted.

The inference I draw from this is that in the kind of enterprise to which government will more and more devote itself calls for a training in which there is a good deal of common ground; more, I think it probable that, apart from the technical knowledge that direct experience, say, of running an air-line can alone give, the training of those whom we pick out for the future occupancy of the chief posts in government service ought to aim at producing men and women with minds sufficiently flexible to transfer without difficulty from one type of work to the other. And this seems to me to mean that the post-entry training which suits the one ought, technical knowledge apart, also to suit the other. The future permanent secretary of the Ministry of Transport ought to be able, to take an obvious illustration, to manage London Transport. Training men to advise ministers on policy ought not to produce the official who is helpless before the problems which the actual execution of policy involves. Insofar as it does, it seems to me to imply that there is something fundamentally wrong with the training. And I suspect that insofar as we have thought that this interchangeability was impossible, or undesirable, the reason lies less in the nature of the function than in the social history which has gone to the making of our Civil Service. I think there is an important lesson for the administration of the future in the fact that the second-lieutenant of 1914 who became Brigadier Gater by 1918 could move without strain from the direction of education in Lancashire and London through the Clerkship of the London County Council first to the Ministry of Home Security and thence to the Colonial Office.

On this plane, there are two further questions on which I should like to say a word. I have already explained why I think that post-entry training for civil servants should not be in a separate staff college, but fitted into the categories of normal university life. I am anxious that alongside the civil servant, local or central, who is receiving this training there should also go the men who are to lead the great industrial organisations, whether on the side of management, or the side of the trade unions, in the sector of private industry. I urge this because I think this kind of intermingling sharpens the imagination and the understanding. It is comparable to the co-ordination effected in the Imperial Defence College; and I suspect that it is not easily attainable unless there is this interchange of experience, just as in a university different disciplines do succeed in interpenetrating one another by the fact that they have to live together, so, I feel confident, the man who is going to run a department of the B.B.C. would learn from the exchange of experience with the man who looks to his future, say, in a railway, and that both, in turn, could help, as they would be helped by, someone who proposes to make the organisation of factory inspection or the administration of health insurance his life work. The more numerous, within reason, the angles of vision from which the principles of administration can be examined the better for the officials, on the one hand, and the public, on the other. And I venture to doubt whether the habit of flexibility, except in the very few remarkable men, the power of adaptation which is the secret of success in administration, is likely to be achieved unless we recognise that the administrator's art, whether in the Civil Service or out of it, is a seamless web which cannot be cut into parts without injury to the breadth of view, the receptivity to experiment, which we shall need with insistent urgency in the next age.

The other thing, on this plane, which I am anxious to emphasise may seem to some of you a platitude though a long experience of academic life convinces me that it needs to be stated afresh in each generation. If such a post-entry training as I

have been discussing were to be established I do hope it will be realised that teaching is the business of the teacher. We have often experimented, in the University of London, in asking men and women who have attained practical eminence in some walk of life to give us a course of lectures in which they set out the burden of their experience. Mostly, they have been a complete failure. The grounds for the failure, no doubt, have been very varied. Sometimes the eminent practitioner has proved incapable of reducing the thing he does so well to a body of principles. Sometimes he is so unaccustomed to anything but the habit of command that he becomes quite helpless under cross-examination—the most vital part of good teaching. Sometimes he has proved quite unable to perceive that the premisses of his practice are just as important as the practice itself. I remember a distinguished American administrator who had said all he knew how to say in the first of four lectures he had agreed to give; the three others were an incoherent misery both for him and for his audience. And in this context I am eager to impress on you the importance in any training of this kind of an adequate historical emphasis. A young administrator could learn much from an examination of the classics of his subject, above all of the assumptions their writers unconsciously made, because every philosophy is an attempt by the writer to externalise his autobiography into a programme. There are few more interesting books on the administrator's art than Sir Henry Taylor's *The Statesman*, now just over a century old; and there could be few better exercises than an attempt to explain why some of its recommendations seem to us to-day merely amusing persiflage. And it would be a useful training for the young business administrator to think out why, in Mr. Taylor's famous book on scientific management, it never occurred to him to enquire, much less to tell the outside world, what became of that Schmidt whose output of pig-iron he so remarkably increased. There is a good deal to be learned from the fact that, some fifty years ago, it did not occur to the outstanding exponent of contemporary Stakhanovism to realise that his Stakhanovite was also a man.

I have concentrated my emphasis in this paper on the administrator who is seen, fairly early, to be likely to make a distinguished career at his job. What I have said would be even more incomplete than it is if I did not urge two other things. First, I think it is overwhelmingly important to recognise that the very scale of modern enterprise makes it vital to provide ways and means for the young people who seem ordinary to their superiors to discover their bent, if they have a bent. Some provision for this will arise if we are wise enough to raise the school-leaving age to sixteen after the war, and to institute compulsory part-time education. I repeat that there is far more ability among the rank and file—every revolution shows this—than we ever take time and pains to discover. Finding one's bent means something more than the chance to improve one's typing or one's short-hand. It means a deliberate effort to make the whole pattern of which one is a part intelligible; it even means an effort to build a bridge between that pattern and the structure of the universe. Certainly we leave far too many people without the chance to discover that they are inventors rather than routineers. A system like ours, especially in so vast an organisation as the Civil Service, condemns too many people to habit without philosophy. There is no more grim way of killing imagination than to leave your administrator in an analogous position to Adam Smith's maker of the ninth part of a pin. Seventeen years of the Civil Service Arbitration Tribunal have convinced me that we are too easily contented with an inert acceptance of that grim way. What has become of the great responsibilities the Whitley system proposed, in 1919, to sponsor in the educational field?

The other remark upon which I venture concerns the older administrator



whose life-work lies pretty clearly before him. I grow ever more confident that we need some system equivalent to the academic sabbatical year for senior officials. He goes on, as it is, year in and year out, with no opportunity for self-examination, with no chance of a period in which he can stand apart from the heat and stress of daily pressure, absorbed endlessly in his files and his interviews. Too often, as a consequence, he becomes the prisoner of a tradition, unacquainted with novelties in his sphere of responsibility, the victim of that unconscious fatigue which can make the very best of us the bitter enemy of the experiment that calls for energy or freshness of mind. I have sometimes felt that if an assistant secretary at the Home Office had three months in Russia we might inaugurate a great epoch of prison reform; I am confident that if I could take some of the higher officials in the India Office or the Colonial Office to the Caucasus or to the Arctic Circle their ministers would learn that the so-called backward races have potentialities of swift progress of which they have never dreamed. Indeed, I venture the audacious assertion that the chance to play the Haroun-el-Raschid for a few months every seven years is a form of post-entry training far more vital than we are willing to assume. It might even give us two or three members of the Foreign Office who understood the psychology of the United States. But, maybe, I am asking for miracles in the age when miracles are no longer possible.

### III.

I end by a return to my beginning. Our process of administration is built upon habits which, very largely, represent the technique invented, mostly by Bentham, for the needs of the Victorian age. I do not deny the immense importance of his discoveries; I even admit that there are fields of activity in which we could still profit from his remarkable experience. But I venture to suggest that the Benthamite formulae we have adapted to our purposes represent a system of habits much of which needs renovation if it is to be valid for the new age upon which we are entering. Our democracy, for instance, must be either much less or much more than it was in the Indian summer of the Victorian compromise. New questions are being asked; most of the old answers seem obsolete or inadequate to those who ask them. The central fact of our time is the erosion of the old premisses which we believed to be part of the eternal order of nature. Frankly, we ought to admit that a revolution has been completed in the minds of our people; and we are meeting its claims with habits which assume that it cannot possibly occur. That is true of the administrator in business; it is true of him in the local government service; it seems to me grimly true of Whitehall. The inter-war years were a period which challenged us to think out afresh the postulates of our organisation; we failed to meet any of the major implications of the challenge. We failed because we did not believe that history could re-open a bargain we believed to be final. But it has in fact been re-opened in a tempest from which there is no hope of escape. Our survival depends upon our courage in facing the storm with men and ideas proportionate to the intensity of its strength. And time presses. Those only who look forward can hope to bring us safely through the dangers it has unloosed. New principles of administration are necessary for a new world.

# Post-Entry Training for Administration from the Public Services Aspect

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[Paper to be discussed at Joint Conference of the I.P.A., N.A.L.G.O., and I.I.A. on 11th April, 1943]

WE normally select our public servants with more care than our Members of Parliament. The would-be official has to satisfy standards of education, integrity and physical fitness which, if they were imposed upon our potential legislators, might have considerable effects upon the composition of Parliament. This preliminary observation is intended not as a gibe at Members of Parliament, but as a reason why we should not assume that pronouncements and recommendations about the organisation and control of the vast machine of the Civil Service are authoritative and call for special attention because they emanate from a Committee of M.Ps. In my view, the 16th Report of the Select Committee deserves a greater measure of commendation for having directed attention to the various problems than for the proposals made for solving them.

In this paper I am concerned with Recommendation No. 21, which makes proposals for a Civil Service Staff College, to provide theoretical and practical training and refresher courses for picked civil servants after a few years' training; and which suggests arrangements to provide special training for those who aim at Organisation and Methods work. In addition, account must be taken of the decision of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to appoint a Committee with terms of reference sufficiently wide to cover the whole question of training civil servants. Although I refer throughout to the Civil Service, I am assured that the same general considerations apply in the wider Public Service field.

I think it is desirable, before considering whether and what post-entry training is necessary, to be clear as to the purpose such training is intended to achieve, and what it is the trainee will be better able to do, at the end of it all, than he does now. For I assume it is to achieve such a result that the planners in this particular field are now active. Paragraphs 121 and 122 in the Select Committee's Report touch upon this point, but give no detailed guidance, and nothing said by the Chancellor of the Exchequer during the Parliamentary debate adds much to our sum total of knowledge. In these circumstances, we can perhaps consider on the basis of past experience, whether the work of the Civil Service has suffered, particularly in more recent years, from the absence of recognised training facilities. I do not believe it has. Indeed, it is my conviction that the normal methods of recruitment, which commenced to function about 1927, produced, in many grades, men and women whose training and intellectual equipment were more than adequate for the tasks required of them. I go further and suggest that, in the later inter-war years, difficulties were arising among the lower grades, because of the inability of the Service to make adequate use of their training and intellectual equipment.

Before the war, the total number of non-industrial civil servants was between 300,000 and 350,000, of whom nearly a half were in the manipulative grades of the Post Office. I get the impression from the Select Committee's Report that its comments and recommendations are concerned with what are commonly

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termed the "Whitehall grades." Accordingly it is to their position that I particularly address myself. In 1935, which is a fair average year to take, there were 53,940 men and women employed in the main Administrative, Executive, Clerical and Typing grades. There were 54,133 in the other Executive, Clerical and departmental grades. The Inspectorates, professional, scientific and technical staffs accounted for nearly 20,000 men and women, and there were messengerial, etc., complements numbering some 18,000. Thus it is fair to assume that the case for post-entry training stands or falls mainly by reference to its possible beneficial effects on the first two categories, numbering well over 100,000 men and women. Within these categories, the Clerical and sub-Clerical staffs provide some 70,000 officers, and normal recruitment to these grades commenced about 1927. In the main, the Clerical Assistant and the Clerical Officer were drawn from Secondary Schools, although the Clerical Officer usually continues a little longer and emerges with higher credits. For the first year or two, the functions of the Clerical Assistant and the Clerical Officer might overlap, but the highest function required at any time from Clerical Officers was often of a relatively limited character. They were expected to deal with particular cases in accordance with well-defined regulations or general practice. They checked accounts according to directions, and prepared in pre-determined form, material for returns and statistics. They were employed on simple drafting and precis work, or in the gathering together of material on which their superior officers might subsequently have to form judgments. The more experienced of these Clerical Officers also supervised the work of Clerical Assistants.

Looking at these classes from a general point of view, I cannot see how any system of post-entry training is likely to add to the efficiency with which they discharge the limited range of functions entrusted to them. By this, I do not suggest that every Clerical Officer or every Clerical Assistant was 100 per cent. efficient, but I contend that most of the deficiencies which existed derive from causes not necessarily removable by the introduction of any general scheme of post-entry training. Indeed, I think it could be shown that unless use can be made of any additional qualifications that may be acquired under such a scheme, the result might well be to add to the total of discontent from which so many of them suffered after a few years of clerical drudgery, when they realised that escape to better and more responsible duties was problematical and, in any event, many years ahead.

In pre-war years I had opportunities of seeing at first hand the staffs working in such large organisations as the Claims and Records Office of the Ministry of Labour at Kew, the Pensions Issue Office at Acton, the Savings Bank and the Money Order Department of the Post Office. In the aggregate, these offices account for many thousands of clerical and sub-clerical staffs. It would be difficult to imagine work more uninspiring, calling less for the qualities of initiative and imagination, or more soul-destroying than much of the work of those offices. Most of the staffs engaged upon it realised that the intellectual equipment with which they had provided themselves to pass the Civil Service Examinations was almost redundant, and the hours between 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. were only made partially tolerable for many of them, by recollections and expectations of their extra-official activities. I have named four offices only, but the problem which existed there was present in many other departments, although the aggregation of staff affected was smaller. It would, of course, be wrong to suggest that there were not lower grade staffs occupied on official work which placed a greater burden on their intellect and imagination, but it is, I think, a safe generalisation that most civil servants in the lower grades to which I have referred were better equipped for their jobs than the quality of the jobs necessitated. In the result, during the years immediately preceding the war, the

discontent of disillusioned and depressed staffs was becoming a serious problem of Civil Service administration.

In the sort of situation to which I have referred, post-entry training must be specialised in its character and related to the functions of particular departments, although in some departments there is little scope for schemes of any sort, if they are intended to add to Civil Service efficiency. In the Inland Revenue Department, for example, there is scope for post-entry training of a specialised kind, directed exclusively to the wide and very complicated functions which that particular department performs. Such training schemes can be devised and are, I believe, already in existence, to cover the lower grades of this department. Similar possibilities exist in other departments, of which I name the ex-Headquarters offices of the Ministry of Labour and the Assistance Board as examples. It will be obvious, however, that post-entry training of a specialised kind designed to make the staffs of these particular departments better equipped to carry out their particular functions is of little use to the staffs of other departments whose functions are of an entirely different character. Moreover, it would be difficult to devise any useful course of training for that large aggregation of staffs whose official activities are of the kind performed in the sort of offices to which I specially referred at an earlier stage.

What, then, is the solution of the problem? A greater measure of interchangeability may suggest itself as one way out of the difficulty, but it is doubtful whether this is really a satisfactory solution. The tax officer who has been specially trained in the intricacies of Income Tax law and administration, would be wasted if he were transferred, say, to the Post Office Savings Bank, in order that a Clerical Officer there might have an opportunity of becoming skilled in Income Tax work. Discontent would inevitably arise because the former possessed particular qualifications of which no use was being made, and, although the Savings Bank transferee might welcome the opportunity of escaping from the monotony of his previous occupation, there would be no over-all addition to the efficiency of either of the two departments involved in the exchange.

Thus we must first deal with the spheres in which specialised training is likely to be of value, and later with the other spheres which provide little or no scope for it. In some of the former areas of the Service, however, the situation is not without its difficulties, I take, as an example of these, the position in the Assistance Board, or in the ex-Headquarters offices of the Ministry of Labour. Members of the subordinate grades in both these services are largely concerned, in normal times, with the consequences of an economic system which creates a considerable army of unemployed men and women. So far as I am aware, neither of these departments encouraged its staffs during the inter-war years, to study the causes of unemployment or why much of their work was really necessary. On the contrary, the official attitude tended to discourage such research or the use of discretion in applying wide and generous interpretations of the regulations the civil servant had to administer. Let us assume, however, that the official attitude had been otherwise, and that the staffs of these two departments had been given official encouragement and assistance to probe deeper into the causes of unemployment in order to be better equipped to deal with its victims. The consequences of this policy might very well have brought into the field political considerations of a controversial character. This would have been inconsistent with the tradition that civil servants must not be influenced by these very considerations in the performance of their day-to-day work. In short there would have been a conflict between the sort of post-entry training which seems appropriate to some departments and the traditional conception of the functions of the civil servant which require him to do many things, into the basic reasons for whose need he is discouraged from probing.

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The problem of that other category of civil servants for whom no specialised training schemes suggest themselves is, I think, one of keeping them mentally alert against the time when they may be advanced to more responsible duties. I see no solution of this problem, if our present organisation and method of recruitment continues, except one which intrudes upon their spare time rather than upon their official time. It is the fact that many civil servants who realise that their minds can only be exercised and kept alive by extra-official rather than official activities, seek a solution by taking a prominent part in various organisations and activities unconnected with their official work. These activities are far too varied and numerous to list, but, as an example, I refer to the number of civil servants serving on Local Government bodies from those departments where this particular form of service is not prohibited. From all this it emerges quite clearly that in many spheres civil servants from the lower grades are expending their abilities more generously in unofficial and voluntary causes than in the performance of their official work, and so often they are doing this as an antidote to the stultifying effects of official routine. It would be to the ultimate benefit of the Service if the State, as employer, positively encouraged by financial and other assistance, this sort of extra-official activity. I appreciate the argument that can be advanced against the expenditure of public money in providing facilities for civil servants to interest themselves in, and to become knowledgeable about subjects not directly connected with their official duties, and I can well imagine what might be said by our more extreme critics, whose objection appears to be that the Civil Service exists at all. I ignore, however, the probability of criticism of this sort, although I cannot ignore the likelihood that another and possibly more serious difficulty might arise if our present-day conception of the limitations imposed upon our public officials remains unchanged. The limitations I refer to are in the political field. It is something of a paradox that the men and women who, in their professional capacities, are so closely connected with the effects of politics, are, in many cases, so indifferent to them. This state of affairs arises largely from the fact that public servants are expected not to take an overt part in political controversy, and to exercise a greater measure of restraint in this respect than is expected from the rest of the community. If there is to be official encouragement of extra-official activities so that the civil servant may gain compensation for mental inactivity during his working hours, the probability that many of them will gravitate to interests of a political character is too strong to be ignored. But it will be better in the long run for this risk to be taken than to go on in the knowledge of the deterioration which is inevitable if so many officers who are not fully extended during their working hours are discouraged from doing something to correct the situation in their spare time.

I have dealt so far only with the lower grades of the Civil Service whose main importance in this matter is that they constitute so considerable a proportion of the total Civil Service. As regards the Administrative and Professional Grades, I support wholeheartedly the view expressed by the Select Committee that there would be advantage in bringing them into visual contact with commerce and industry and with outside bodies with which their official work is concerned. This sort of relationship is justified, however, because of the functions performed by members of these grades, and not so much because their particular Departments have contacts with outside industry. Thus an Administrative Principal who advises on matters of policy affecting, say, the mining industry, will obviously be advantaged by a working knowledge of that industry; it is doubtful, however, whether the clerk in the Mines Department whose job it is to check the travelling claims of mining inspectors needs to know very much about the industry itself in order efficiently to do his job.



I would go further than the Select Committee, however, and insist that nobody, however brilliant his academic qualifications may be, was allowed to function in an administrative capacity until he had served his apprenticeship in the more routine work of his Department. It is very desirable that an official, who may later in his career give instructions to subordinates, should know what is entailed in their execution. This is far from being the case at the present time. I would also insist that in those Departments whose work involves direct personal contact with the public, experience in the "front line" of the Department should be an essential pre-requisite to the attainment of higher office. The administrative staffs of the Ministry of Labour and the Assistance Board, for example, should know what an unemployed man looks and feels like, and what effects Departmental regulations and procedure have upon him personally. Moreover, I would insist that the practical knowledge given by personal contact should be renewed from time to time by refresher courses.

All these things can be achieved, however, without the creation of a Staff College to which I am strongly opposed. The experience of the Police experiment in this direction is already fresh in our minds, and it is not an overstatement of the case to assert that this experiment caused so much resentment within the Police Force as to outweigh any possible advantage that might have accrued from it. The Select Committee suggests that promising members of the Executive and Clerical Grades could be sent to the College, after a few years' service. The great difficulty would be to determine how these promising young people were to be selected. Earlier on I have given a very general outline of the sort of work which many members of these grades in their early years of service have to perform. I cannot conceive of any test which is likely, on the one hand, to produce potential administrators, and, on the other hand, to give reasonable satisfaction to the staff as a whole. The clerk who is painstaking and accurate may be hopelessly unsuited for administrative work; whilst his colleague, whose hand-writing is execrable and whose arithmetic faulty, may nevertheless prove a first-class head of department. Thus, selections for the Staff College would necessarily have to be made according to criteria unrelated to actual performance, and it is here that the trouble would start, as it started at the Hendon Police College. Moreover, since there would be something of a vested interest created between the selecting body, the Staff College authorities and the selected individuals, to ensure that in general the scheme worked, there is a considerable risk that the effects of an initial error of judgment would persist through an officer's career.

Such a scheme is bound to have bad effects upon those younger men and women who must always comprise the majority of the staffs, but who would not be selected for the Staff College. They would know far too early in their official lives that their prospects of advancement to the highest posts were negligible, and the discontent which now begins to reveal itself among disappointed staffs in their later thirties would show itself at a much earlier age with serious consequences to the morale of the Service as a whole.

To deal with the problem of training for the Civil Service in present circumstances is to begin the wrong way round. Its consideration should be preceded by a comprehensive review of the existing structure, with particular reference to grading and methods of recruitment. My support is for a scheme involving all entry to the basic grade with appropriate recognition of the fact that the arrivals will have achieved different ages and stages of education. This would necessitate different starting pay points adjusted to those circumstances. I suggest that before assignments take place of successful candidates they should be interviewed by a carefully selected body with a view to ascertaining the sort of Departments in which they are most likely to do well. The arrangement that operated up to the time when examinations were suspended was hopelessly

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deficient. A candidate would be invited to indicate his order of preference as between a number of Departments listed on a document sent to him. He would probably know little or nothing of any of them, and very often, unless he were given some good advice, his selections would be shots in the dark. So often, however, it did not matter very much what answer he returned, because the Civil Service Commission would assign him to whatever Department happened to be wanting persons of his grade at the time his name was reached on the call-up register. This was a very unsatisfactory arrangement, particularly as the original allocation often determined where the appointee might spend the next forty years of his official career.

Having suggested the need for initial assignments to be on a more scientific basis, I return to the grading question, which is of the utmost importance in relation to post-entry training schemes. Under the existing organisation, some Departments are staffed on the Administrative-Clerical basis, and others on the Executive-Clerical basis. Those who are assigned to the former groups of Departments—and I have already indicated how fortuitous these assignments are—can, early in their careers, often arrive at an approximate estimate of the earliest date when promotion will come their way. Their first outlet is to the supervisory grade of the Clerical Class known as the Higher Clerical Officer Grade, to which promotion is made largely on the basis of seniority. This, I think, is a thoroughly bad system. It means that little or nothing can be done by the individual in the intervening years, which is likely to have much effect upon his official progress. Moreover, as I have already explained, the work upon which a large number of these officers is engaged makes it difficult in present circumstances to devise training schemes likely to affect their position or add materially to their efficiency.

Those who are assigned to the Executive-Clerical organisations have earlier opportunities because movement in this area is normally more rapid and takes place earlier. Thus, in this area, ambitions tended to run higher during the first few years of service, and many young men and women during the open recruitment years sought to enhance their prospects of promotion to the Executive Grade by outside studies in Accountancy, Insurance Law, and other subjects related to the work of their Departments.

There was, however, the tragedy of the young men and women, assigned to hopeless Departments, who imagined that, by intensive study after office hours, and by taking degrees in particular subjects, they could improve their official prospects. A large number of young civil servants in their early twenties spent their spare time and money in this way, only to find that the results neither enhanced their prospects of advancement nor expedited their removal from routine work.

The one-grade method of entry into the Administrative-Executive-Clerical Civil Service is an essential preliminary to the introduction of any general basis of post-entry schemes of training, because it would make available for promotion all posts in the general grades above, and would thereby offer opportunities of using the fruits of training. But such a scheme must be accompanied by a much larger degree of interchangeability of younger staffs than operated before. Granted these two preliminaries, something worth while can be done about training, but a Staff College is not necessary to achieve it.

The plan I suggest is, therefore, as follows. Entry in all cases to be to the basic grade, with the entry in ages varying according to the various stages of educational development. Initial assignments to be on a more scientific basis than at present, and for the first few years of service the young civil servant not to be considered as fixed in a particular Department. Training courses covering a variety of the main functions performed by Government Departments to be introduced, and staffs in their early years of service to be given the oppor-

tunity of proceeding on courses related to the particular spheres of activity in which they prefer to serve. Initial selection of courses which might, in some cases, prove mistaken, to be remedied by further opportunities, with some regulating system to ensure that the number of persons receiving specialist training in particular phases of official work was not hopelessly out of proportion to the capacity of Departments to absorb those who prove suitable. The State, as employer, to provide opportunities of non-vocational training, with a view to developing and maintaining mental alertness and a wider interest in affairs.

I recognise that under such an arrangement the number of people who ultimately achieve greater responsibilities and higher posts might not be more than under the present system, because the limitations are fixed much more by the needs of the work than the capacity of those who have to do it. The stimulation of ambition would, however, be more widespread than at present, and although disillusionment would come to many who had fixed their hopes high, the processes through which they had passed in the intervening years would have done something to destroy the "one-track" outlook which is so common at the present time. I believe that during the formative years interests might, in this way, be stimulated to an extent that the absence of any subsequent official advancement would seem less of an all-pervading tragedy than it does at the present time.

## The Principles of Promotion

By W. V. BRADFORD, C.B.

(*Director of Establishments, Inland Revenue*)

[A Paper read to an informal meeting of Civil Service Establishment Officers, December, 1942]

WE are told that in the Kingdom of Heaven there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage; a revelation that tends to deepen in some minds the thought of eternal bliss. The same doubtless is the case with promotion. The just man once made perfect can presumably be made nothing more; it is only to serve the purposes of an imperfect world that you want promotion. Places continually fall vacant and have to be filled; the troubles incurred in filling them are legion.

Every good Establishment Officer, I am sure, deplures the necessity, and personally I am appalled at the amount of work and trouble that promotions cause, though I recognise the need for all the work that we give to them, and more. This, by the way, seems to me a great drawback to the idea of everybody entering the Civil Service on the ground floor. The promotions work to which it would give rise, done badly, would be the ruin of the scheme; and in any case would be so much that the Service would have little time left over from combing itself out for its other duties.

Promotion is an incident of life in organisations. It is not quite the same as simply getting on in the world, which is the normal experience of every fit person who tries hard and fairly. Promotion is a special kind of getting on. It presupposes a specially ordered and disciplined organisation. With ordinary good luck and diligence one may get on in the grocery trade or as a dentist, but one is not promoted to be a higher grade dentist or grocer.



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This reflection is perhaps not so trivial as it may sound. As the regimentation of mankind increases, more and more people probably will find their progress in life systematised: but for the present, the majority, in civil careers at all events, do not. Properly speaking, promotion is confined to a minority, who work in highly organised bodies. It is thus not, as it is sometimes represented to be, a sort of birthright of humanity.

### THREE AXIOMS

Having thus removed promotion (however temporarily) from the rights of man as such, I want to offer you three axioms about promotion in the Civil Service, where it exists as a normal incident of life in a highly developed organisation—in what I might term the systematised career.

This is the first axiom. The object of systematising careers is to provide for the well-being, not of each individual worker, but of the organisation, whatever it is that is in question, as an efficient body of workers. Civil servants are not there for promotion, but promotion is there to provide civil servants of this or that kind and in such numbers as are required.

The second axiom is this. What properly determines the selection of people for promotion is the good that their promotion will bring to the organisation in which they serve.

And the third is, the whole position pre-supposes an authority governing and regulating the organisation. That authority must take entire responsibility for building human material into the fabric, which is what promotion is doing: and should regard that responsibility as amongst the most vital of its concerns.

I submit that these axioms are of general validity and that they apply to the problems of peace, with their background of comparative stability in numbers and disposition of staffs, as well as to the difficulties of dealing with war-time staffs. Doubtless there are great differences, but improvisation and speedy decision, which are war-time features, demand above all, if they are to be successful, a correct grasp of principles.

Please notice that there is no science of promotion: there is no exact formula of universal application. Promotion is an art, in which the result depends on the correct grasp of fundamental principles, and on faith and perseverance in applying them. Perseverance, because of the great importance in this connection of taking long and steady views. *Nil per saltum* is a maxim to be written large in all Establishments policy; nowhere larger than in the departments of recruitment and of promotion, which are building up the permanent fabric of staffs. Quick results will never be satisfactory.

I want to examine some of these principles, in relation chiefly to big permanent staffs.

### PROMOTION NOT A SORT OF REMUNERATION

There is a heresy of long standing to the effect that Civil Service promotion is a sort of remuneration. A gentleman who in 1836 was the permanent Head of the Colonial Office stated in print that the rewards of service were (a) standing and consideration, (b) hopes and expectations, (c) cash present. Some twenty years ago within my own recollection it was stated in black and white by a Staff Association that the prospects of promotion are essentially a factor in the remuneration of a civil servant. It is necessary to affirm on the contrary that the State owes the individual civil servant no more than the pay, including pension, related to the job that he is doing. Whatever goes beyond that is a matter of grace for the individual. He can however reflect that probably it is a grim necessity for the administration to promote somebody.

Promotion is most certainly to be dispensed with justice. Our individual friend, if he is promoted, certainly ought to have the comfort of reflecting that

if the administration could have found a better man for his job, they would. Promotion ought to be merited—but I beg you never to agree that “merited” equals “earned.” Pay is earned, and after it has been earned there is a right to recover it. There is no right by which an individual can claim promotion for himself.

Another aspect of the “earned” question that has further bearings to be mentioned later is that the promotee is promoted not because of what he has done in the past but of what he is expected to do in the future. The logical outcome of the “earned” theory would be a rush to heap promotion on an officer on the eve of his retirement: which in fact one refrains from doing, whatever the distinction of his past services.

#### THE CONCEPTION OF CAREER VALUE

The conception of career value is one of great utility in Establishments work. It measures the average return over a given sort of career in the Service, so that we can compare this with the average given by other careers in other spheres of life. It is normal for a man to get on in the world; and it is only human and inevitable for people in the Service to develop a grouse if on the average they are getting on too badly as compared with comparable people outside. What they regard as comparable people are those who have come from similar walks of life, have done about the same in their educational careers and so forth. That aspect of affairs is of the greatest possible importance in recruitment and in framing cadres. You are asking for trouble if a reasonable career is not forthcoming for the type of man you are recruiting. What you have done in framing such a staff is to create an organism that is unstable—that is not capable of continued existence, or not in that shape.

One ought to find great satisfaction in being able to meet the reasonable aspirations of staff as a whole. The Civil Service, however, does not exist primarily to satisfy aspirations: it satisfies them in order to exist. Provided that there is no ground for a collective grouse, *i.e.*, provided that the career value normally realised is reasonably satisfactory, one must not be greatly concerned over individual disappointments. Injustices are quite another thing and are a grave matter. Injustices, in this connection, are suffered by patient merit in observing the advancement of people genuinely less worthy. One of the best preventatives is to be resolved to err, if at all, on the side of strictness in judging merit, and never on that of indulgence.

There is a theory of the incentive, which is sometimes known by the title of “carrots,” that is somewhat allied to the theory of earning promotion. According to the “carrots” doctrine, promotion is rather a potent drug, a sort of hormone, of which a dose had better be injected into the individual civil servant from time to time, or he will not—in a phrase hallowed by years of repetition—“give of his best.” The “carrots” theory is really a perversion of the career value principle. Most necessary it is to establish conditions in which any staff will gladly work their best. Staff, however, will always do so in conditions that normally, experience shows, afford a career that is reasonably good by ordinary standards, provided always that advancement in that career is regulated by justice between man and man. Disappointments do not cause good officers to slack, and I would urge again and again that it is not the individual but the collective consciousness that matters. A system that attempts to forestall possible disappointments or to ground a claim to good service on fulfilment of individual hopes is dangerous and even absurd. What keeps a staff sweet is the collective consciousness of a square deal.

#### THE SENIORITY FACTOR

Various considerations centre about the criterion of selection for promotion. Almost mystical importance attaches in some minds to seniority. So far as I

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know there are two and only two principles involved in seniority. The first is that the rule of seniority, like the queue, is a convenient and mannerly method for the distribution of things in which everybody starts level for claiming a share. "Seniores priores," or "first come, first served," are the well-known tags. But promotion is not a matter for queue distribution. People hardly ever do start level; and it is only in the cases where they do that queue seniority can possibly count.

The other principle is that human society does in certain circumstances have a practice of vesting leadership in an elder. The circumstances in which this occurs will be found, I believe, to be those in which experience, as distinct from superior native ability or special training, plays a dominant part. The elder man, considered purely as elder, may be looked to for more extended knowledge, but hardly for different knowledge. He does not necessarily get a higher viewpoint or a new angle of vision as the years pass, and without these he is suited only for such higher posts as involve no great difference in duty.

It is a pity that I cannot find a simple word to express the benefit derived by a team from a man being moved up in it, but that in reality is the conception that includes everything. Experience in some circumstances tells heavily, but all depends on the degree to which experience, in the lower post, induces competence for the duties of the higher post. Even where seniority means profitable experience, the value can be over-rated. Comparative youth, also, is of positive value. As between two people, of presently equal powers and equal promise, the younger may better deserve a Department's money. He has farther to go. Mere paper seniority, which is simply precedence in a queue, should determine selection only when everything else fails. It is a most unsatisfactory means of determining the succession to any post of serious importance. It is even unfair, in those cases where few opportunities may yet remain to the unsuccessful stander in the queue, that so much should depend on mere accident.

The criterion is sometimes spoken of as fitness, or ability. I would not receive these terms, convenient as they are, into currency without deprecating possible crude views. Promotion is not a sort of prize-giving in an intellectual competition. What, I believe, requires to be borne in mind by the authority responsible for promotions is in the first place its duty to provide human material of the right quality and in the right condition for use at the time when it is wanted in every part of the organisation; and in the second place its duty to answer reasonable demands of what I have called the collective consciousness. The criteria of selection must be framed so that they can deliver the goods; and selection must be so conducted that the staff as a whole are treated fairly. Various ways of failing in this duty are—

- (a) if higher posts come to be filled with material of quality less than the best that could have been available;
- (b) if, notwithstanding that the best men do reach the higher posts, they get there too late in life, or with a poorly developed experience so that their service in those posts is not the service that it might have been;
- (c) if too severe a standard is demanded and it has subsequently to be relaxed or, far more often, too indulgent a standard has been taken and it has to be made more stringent. Either will entail harm to the organisation.

### CLASS TO CLASS PROMOTION

Incidentally, what is known as class to class promotion deserves mention. It is rather a thing by itself, but the standards for it, I suggest quite definitely,

should be such as will provide members of the class to which promotions are being made, who will be of no less utility in it, broadly speaking, than those who are recruited to it directly. They should be capable of holding their own in a comparison of values and also of enjoying a career in the new class comparable with that of the direct entrant, unless it is desired to load the class into which they enter with "stickers."

I might mention one special difficulty. Everyone nowadays, I suppose, would like to see a full career lying open to talent, but to take the clerical class as a concrete example, I find that one is faced with the need for very careful picking if one is to get really suitable people for promotion to Executive rank; and one is faced also with inadequacy of data for purposes of selection. The supply of talent in the clerical ranks is limited; the educational ladder, for one thing, is responsible for that. Also the opportunities for a young clerical officer to show, in the first 10 or 12 years of his career, that he is something a little out of the ordinary, are very scanty. Nor are his immediate superiors apt always to be good judges in such a cause. The answer to the problem, perhaps, may lie in instituting a central selection authority for class-to-class promotions to which Departments could refer the best of their younger clerical and sub-clerical's for "vetting."

I am inclined to think, at all events, that class-to-class promotion is a subject that is to be seen in the truest light if viewed under the main heading of "recruitment" rather than of "promotion."

#### THE QUESTION OF STANDARD

A moment ago I mentioned standards. Promotion is like competitive examination in respect that it involves a duality of standards. There is what you may call a qualifying standard, and there is the standard set by the competitors themselves.

The primary business of a promotions body (which is the Revenue word for the committees who have the duty of reviewing staff and submitting recommendations) is to pick the best of those officers that are ripe. I shall proceed to suggest that this is all they need to do, but in practice they will often insist that their duties involve the discovery of a suitable standard (which is, so to speak, the bare qualifying standard *plus*) and they submit for promotion everybody, in order of seniority, who is above the mark thus fixed. I lose no opportunity for insinuating that they are mistaken, but an Establishment Officer has to live with promotions bodies and to some extent to take them as he finds them. In any case it is important for an Establishment Officer to see how big is the gap between the quality of the man that he would be just willing to take for promotion if he had to, and the quality that he is able, in fact, to command. Too great wideness of the gap may be due to recruitment being on too high a plane, or something may be wrong with the cadre. Like a garment, it may be too tight and need a tuck letting out. Cadres are not entirely a matter of scientific measurement of work, but in framing them one ought also to remember career values. Promotion bottle-necks, especially in the lower ranges of a hierarchy, are not health giving. Competition ought to be enough to keep people well on their toes, but not so severe as to seem a lottery; or to suggest too much the Pauline text that "they that run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize."

Selective processes of Civil Service promotion are endurable, and are cheerfully borne, according as they correspond with effective differences in human quality. These differences are judged pretty fairly by the collective consciousness of which I spoke just now, although seldom so judged by interested individuals. Ideally, each individual ought to stand a reasonable chance of growing up approximately to whatever is his limit or "ceiling."

## THE FIELD OF REVIEW

How widely is the net to be spread when one is reviewing staff for promotion purposes? The maintenance of a highly organised staff in a succession of grades, one under the other, at the highest point of efficiency demands a properly proportioned experience in those officers in each generation who rise eventually to the highest ranks. It is not a good thing for them to be rushed there in the end, after spending in junior ranks long years which could have been devoted with much more advantage to the work of intermediate positions. In staffs like these the key men need to be like queen bees—the objects of a far-seeing solicitude on the part of the whole hive. They must be properly brought up; in other words, given a full and a balanced career, so as best to perform their final service, namely that of leadership in the higher posts. To do this, it is necessary, in the sort of organisation that I am discussing, where there are numerous grades, to promote the men of the future at each stage of their career as soon as they become ripe for promotion. One needs, therefore, to consider what are the stages, *i.e.*, what are the optimum periods for men of first rate ability, who may eventually be needed at the top, to spend on the intermediate rungs of the ladder.

I am not acknowledging any prerogative of these people in their own right, as a sort of aristocracy of intellect. It is merely that one absolutely needs to get the best men into the best posts in the best state of training and at the proper time to give their best service there.

It is the career map, so to speak, for one of this kind of people, showing the stages of his progress, that ought to determine the scope of review in making promotions. Suppose that we have a big organisation in numerous tiers. The normal retiring age is say 60. We have a small group of controlling posts at the top and one would say presumably that 55 was the very latest really suitable age for making appointments to those posts. The next step is to see what represents the optimum length of experience in the grade below, which in its turn will indicate what is the latest suitable age (for the best people) for making appointments to that grade, and so on. When you have found for any grade what is the number of years in it, after which you ought to be taking the best people out, I suggest boldly that all that you have to do is to take them. In other words, as vacancies arise you will review everybody in the grade who has had at least that length of service in it and promote the best in order of merit, irrespective of anything else. Only you want to be sure that they *are* the best, *i.e.*, that they really are the people who will do the most good. A great deal of weakness in promotions policy is to be traced back to inadequate study, or information, on this subject.

Unless either your system of appraisement is faulty or you are recruiting people of too high a standard, you will only find in practice quite a small proportion of really first-rate people. By promoting in order of merit after the minimum period has been served for maturity you do nothing but good. You get staff stratified in alternative streaks of fat and lean; and you get the fat, in each generation, where it ought to be, at the top.

## ANNUAL REPORTS

Annual reports form an important part of promotions machinery. The form in use in the Revenue covers (a) a detailed review of the officer's worth as shown in his existing post, and (b) a simple estimate of his worth in the higher post for which he is potentially a candidate. These two estimates are by no means the same. (a) Is a record of what has been observed, *viz.*, firstly what sort of a fellow the officer is to meet, to live and to work with, secondly his intellectual outfit, in such matters as insight, imagination, judgment of what is and what is not important, and thirdly the results of these things, in the weight that he pulls and



the standing that he enjoys with colleagues and with subordinates. (b) Necessarily is more or less of a jump; the distance to be jumped depends on how far the duties in the higher grade call for different qualities from those in the lower. It was said of a certain Roman Emperor that everyone would have voted him fit for the purple if only he had never worn it. This goes for a good many people besides Roman Emperors. Other things being equal the risk is greater as one goes up the scale.

The forms are completed, subject to the Head of the Branch, by the officer in immediate charge of the individual reported upon, who is termed the reporting officer, and by a superior, who countersigns and gives his own remarks and criticisms. The operations of these officers form a weak spot. Not only is their experience, and their judgment, occasionally immature, but they are exposed unconsciously to temptation. Reporting officers in particular have to live and to work with the people on whom they are reporting, and this conduces too easily to weak reports. Reports are usually too generous. Weak reporting officers, however, tend not to be generous to ability that is raising its head for the first time; they are too timid to commit themselves to discovery of any new stars. Another mistake of reporting officers is to imagine that they are being asked to say whether, in their judgment, so and so *ought* to be promoted; instead of being asked to take his size.

The gloom of this picture is not unrelieved in practice, for in a series of the reports upon any officer are found to provide valuable and interesting material, and the vagaries of reporting and countersigning officers can be gauged to an often surprising extent. It is a very important part of the duty of the Head of any Branch, and also of the promotions body, to do this. The latter are assisted by an appeals procedure, which allows officers aggrieved by non-promotion to make representations in person in suitable cases.

Over a long experience in these appeals I have found only a small minority in which an officer, who had been for any length of years in the Department, appeared to be undermarked; many, on the other hand, where the promotions body had been justified in making, or in accepting a substantial write-down of reports.

Heads of Branches in the Revenue employing officers of the executive grades, who are interchangeable from one such Branch to another, review the executive staff in joint meeting and report jointly on their qualifications. In so doing their standards of marking fall into three main categories, which are by this time well understood and may be interesting to mention although their use is limited to classifying staff of Executive grades.

The lowest category indicates that an officer is capable of performing with satisfaction the duties of his existing grade. Apart from what may be inferred from that fact, it does not indicate any judgment of his fitness to perform higher duties. The meeting, in fact, refuses to commit itself to any jump, where there is any jump to be taken. Such a marking has some value in the case of basic graders standing for their first promotion, but it will be gathered from what I have previously said that it is very little recommendation of an officer at later stages in his career.

The next higher category indicates in addition to fitness for the existing duties a further definite judgment that the man is fit to perform duties of the next higher grade. The jump is taken, in fact.

The highest category of marking shows in addition to a higher degree of fitness for immediate promotion a confident expectation that in early course the officer will develop fitness to go still further. Emphasis attaches to "confident" and "early." Thus the jump is taken flying. It is, however, the normal rule for any executive Head of Branch reporting a man in this high category, for the first time, to surrender him for transfer to another Branch so that the marking

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can be confirmed before it is accepted, at a later meeting, as a general judgment.

These three categories are zones on a scale and they permit of being shaded, so that one gets a result much the same as that of another well-known marking convention. One gets in effect Alpha, Beta and Gamma men with plus and minus shadings. The important man to look out for is the Alpha man.

As I said before, he will exist in a normal Civil Service staff in comparatively small proportion. Also he does not change his nature, as a rule. The man who is first class at 50 was not second class at 30; although on the work he was then doing, his merits may not have been so apparent. But all the more reason for spotting him at 30.

### SUMMING UP

I ask myself, now that my time is drawing to its close, what, if anything, have you got in return for your sufferings. It is little enough that I have to offer, but the sum seems to be this. I suggest that the Service needs to take long views and to frame steady policies about recruitment and about promotion particularly. I would repeat my three axioms.

The first axiom was this: that the reason for having systematised careers is the well-being of the organisation, whatever it is, as an efficient working body. The object of promotion is to provide civil servants: not to provide *for* civil servants.

The second axiom was that in choosing people for promotion one must look simply and solely at the good that the organisation gets out of the fact that this man rather than another is being moved up in the team. Get the right men in the right places, and my faith is that all other things will be added unto you.

The last was that promotions are the responsibility of the authority governing the organisation, and are a most vital responsibility.

I suggest that promotions problems deserve the keenest interest that Departments can devote to them. I would stress the point that Departments have vast forward commitments by way of providing leadership, and a vigilant eye must be kept on assuring future deliveries of this class of goods: I mean securing a succession of the right people at the right time and with suitably formed experience for posts at the top of important organisations.

I would add that the achievement of that task demands forethought, careful, that is to say prolonged and intelligent, observation of men and watchful planning; in all of which one is enormously helped if one can fairly say, whatever the disappointments of individuals, that staff are collectively conscious of getting not indulgence, but fair and square and not haphazard recognition of their worth. In other words, when you think of recruitment, or when you think of proportioning the several grades in a cadre, you are thinking of something that affects you in the vital task of maintaining a sound promotions policy.

The soundest policy, I maintain, is the simplest, namely, when you have a vacancy, to put into it, regardless of everything else, the man who will do most good in it. I suggest that the acceptance of this doctrine is becoming year by year more indispensable to the well-being of the Service; and that if it is accepted, we need to spend more time and effort than perhaps we now do in planning so as to allow it full scope; bearing in mind the relations of the policy to other questions, such as those I have mentioned, of what I may call the architecture of big staffs; and also bearing in mind the study of individuals. We need, I am convinced, to provide for the closer study of human values; for more continuous watch upon potentialities amongst the best men in younger groups, and so on. "The proper study of mankind," in fact, deserves somewhat more to be encouraged amongst us.

# Concerning Religion, Ethics and Efficiency

By W. A. Ross, O.B.E.

**B**EFORE the war, when a Minister proposed to make a speech on some subject affecting his department, he usually asked an officer of the department to furnish a brief. The facts in such a brief were always useful. The ideas, though far below the level of the Minister's own ideas if he had been able to give time to the subject, were generally good enough to jog his tired mind into a train of thought, and, if he were very tired, he might make use of them. I recollect that very late one night in the Ministry of Health, after a gruelling day, a request came to me to supply a brief for the Minister on "the right use of leisure," that being a subject on which he had been invited to talk at a dinner later in the evening. I could only think of Tantalus in the underworld, pining with thirst amidst the waters which rose to his chin and then receded. The position was the same as if Pluto had commanded him to supply a brief forthwith on the evils of excessive drinking. No other idea occurred to me. I thought of the Board of Education who occupied adjoining rooms, and after some search had the extreme good fortune to discover one of their officials who was staying late. A note on leisure and its uses was quickly prepared, and so the difficulty was happily resolved.

If I could think myself back into that position now, the kind of brief I should submit is Part I of this paper, which relates to a condition of things before the present war.

## I.

The following is a picture of the over-civilised man, representing specialisation of function in conjunction with the standard conventional virtues. The picture is taken not from the public services only but from the large organisations generally which are characteristic of our towns and cities. The colours are necessarily deepened in order to show more clearly a certain disease of occupation or disease of civilisation. It is not suggested that any particular person could be found who accurately reproduced the details of the picture.

The work by which the man earns his daily bread is something less, perhaps very much less, than one per cent. of the things in life that really matter. The whole of his energy is devoted to this work, often including his evenings and his week-ends. If we adopt the philosopher's division of the soul into mind, spirit or passion, and appetite or desire, there is excessive development of mind and starvation of the other two elements. But the mind that is developed is not the whole mind but only part of the mind. In the result the man comes to know more and more of less and less, and finally less and less of less and less. The expert, if he is only an expert, ends in ignorance of his own job. The obvious remedy within the sphere of work is to give the man a change of work. Much, however, depends on a proper use of the time outside the hours of work. He must create for himself a certain amount of leisure. He should use that leisure to employ faculties of mind and soul as far as possible different from those employed in his work. He should live dangerously and seek adventure wherever it is to be found. He should exercise to the full passion and desire. He must of course continue to observe the laws and the ten commandments. The over-civilised man will in fact do all these things, but he will do them at second hand. He will read thrillers and frequent the cinema. There is a curious

suggestion made by Plato in a very similar connection. He recommends that the decorous, orderly, over-disciplined person should marry a woman of a bold, forceful, flamboyant type. The union, says Plato, is likely to be very uncomfortable, but it should be entered into for the sake of the offspring who will combine the virtues of both parents. But marriages are not so easily dissolved in England as in ancient Athens, and the offspring, if any, may not fulfil Plato's expectations. Nevertheless, for the over-civilised man, a grand passion would be the very thing whether it ended in marriage or not, that is, if it were possible to kindle a flame of passion with materials so damp.

If we alter the picture and postulate a man of a different type, a man who compensates for coming late to work by leaving early, that man, if he has a touch of the practical genius which Bernard Shaw describes as an infinite capacity for making other people take pains, will get on reasonably well with his work at ordinary times, and in times of crisis is likely to be more effective than the man first described, provided he so uses his leisure as to keep alert his mind and all his faculties. He will have more initiative, imagination and constructive ability, because these qualities in the sphere of work are fed by impressions and experiences gathered in the time of leisure.

## II.

The war has brought adventure enough and dangerous living, and has shown that there is much more grit, even in the over-civilised man, than the picture indicates. However, the disease is inseparable from modern civilisation and is likely to return when peace is restored. I propose to seek a remedy, or, better still, a method of prevention, which is more in harmony with the English tradition and fits in well with the love of continuity so characteristic of the official mind. It amounts to this, that a precedent is taken from certain troublous times of the past and applied to the troublous times of the present and the future.

There is no greater figure in English history than Oliver Cromwell. He was a very practical man who knew much about war and government and, had he lived now, would doubtless have been sympathetic to any staff college or other proposal likely to make himself and his men more efficient. But he would have said that something much more vital was required, and that he could find no trace, either in past discussions of this Institute or elsewhere, of the supreme incentive. His speeches and letters are set out in the work of Thomas Carlyle, who described one of those speeches as a great block of unbeaten gold, a speech worthy of Valhalla and the Sanhedrim of the Gods. If we examine those letters and speeches, we find the supreme incentive in the Bible. It is doubtful whether, apart from State papers, Cromwell read anything else. There are many quotations both from the Old and the New Testaments, but references to the Gospels are very rare, and I can trace no direct reference to the Sermon on the Mount. He knew well the epistles of St. Paul and had a firm grasp of his doctrines. There is much about humility, and an occasional reference to Christian charity in the letters and speeches. But the main stimulus was derived from the Old Testament, from the storm and sunshine of Isaiah (more storm than sunshine), the battle joy of certain of the Psalms, the apocalyptic and very destructive fervour of Zephaniah—with visions of a golden age to come. There is much hatred in these old prophets, and the curious question arises—whether an element of hatred is not part of the ingredients of a strong character. Cromwell was a good hater. The Spaniard was to him the antichrist.

The Bible was for Cromwell not a consolation, an escape from the world, but a spur to action, a dynamic. He read a passage from Isaiah or from the Psalms on the night before a battle or the storming of a town. His followers, the Ironsides, were similarly engaged. Of course the practical side, the patient

examination of ends and means was there all the time. Even the dispatches after the fight, like the speeches in Parliament, are plentifully garnished with quotations from the Bible and reminders of the need for Christian humility.

What was the secret of this dynamic? The reading of many good books produces many interests, but the gain in extensity is balanced by a loss in intensity. If the interest centres in one book, the book of books, the inspired book, the interest is canalised, it becomes reverence, devotion, and the spirits of those who wrote the book descend upon the reader. Thus a force is generated which, acting upon the will of a person with an otherwise well-informed and well-balanced mind, is overwhelming in its practical results. What would have happened if in times gone by a person had come down to his office in Whitehall full of the battle joy of Cromwell's favourite Psalms, with the storm of Isaiah and the destructive fervour of Zephaniah? Would he not have laid about lustily and cut his way through the jungle of laws, regulations, bye-laws and intricate detail until he emerged into the sunlight of essential principles? Then would follow a period of constructive effort, preparing a way for the golden age to come. No doubt he would have to pause occasionally and remind himself of the need for Christian humility.

In actual fact the position is not quite so simple—that is, not for the official. Even now in retirement two ineradicable habits of official life remain—the habit of raising points and the habit, very necessary in the settling of justiciable or semi-justiciable issues, of hearing both sides. It is not enough to read Bishop Gore on the Bible, one must needs find out what Tom Paine or Strauss has to say about it. As regards the raising of points, these are more than the divines of the North can answer, *e.g.*, how to reconcile the views of Solomon on marriage with those of St. Paul, the hate of the prophets with the love of John's Gospel, the arrogance and the "eternal fire" of the Athanasian Creed with the sweet reasonableness of the Sermon on the Mount. It seems that a dire penalty awaits the "unknown official" denounced by Lord Hewart, who trampled on the liberties of Englishmen by deciding cases which should have been settled by the Courts—in the name of a Minister who never handled the cases. He will be condemned to live in the underworld, always raising points, always hearing both sides, like Tantalus surrounded by the waters of truth, which ever recede from his lips as he strives to slake his thirst.

What can be done to counteract this analytic and excessively just habit of mind which grows with age? Plato in the *Laws*, the work of his old age, states that the young should not drink wine. They have fire enough already, and there is no need to add fire to fire. But the elderly are lacking in fire, and it is good that they should drink wine. The suggestion may be noted for future use, but at present, even in the North, it is almost impossible to obtain a liquid with any fire in it. I believe the remedy consists in "thinking with the blood," that is, in thinking not only with mind but also with passion and appetite. The Nazis would not be so formidable if there were not elements of strength in their creed. There is a popular phrase about the rake turning saint. If we disregard the misleading implications in the word "rake" this, like other popular phrases, offers a valuable guide to the philosopher. If St. Augustine had not in youth been very full blooded, he would not have been able to burn his way, through Manichæan and other perplexities, to religious conviction, and so to saintly pre-eminence.

We may now return to Cromwell and the question how a modern man can so canalise reverence or enthusiasm as to generate a force not unlike the force of Cromwell. A reverence created in the young by suitable education will usually survive the stifling effect of later life. Some embers will always be left which can be stirred into a flame. For this reason there is much to be said for an education which leaves an abiding reverence for the Bible. This follows the



national tradition, and, inasmuch as it will be shared with many people, it is likely to be more potent in later life than, for instance, a reverence for Plato and the Greeks which will be shared with very few. But it is true that the same force may be generated, if it is canalised, by devotion to a book or books or some other object, which is different from the Bible. Alexander slept with Homer under his pillow, and Homer helped him to conquer Asia. The martial songs of Tyrtæus roused the Spartans and gained victories. The poetry of Virgil inspired Augustus and thus affected the history of the world. It may be that the deeds of Samson, Barak, Gideon, will not inspire a Scotsman from the North so much as the deeds of his own fighting forefathers, or even the story of some wild cateran, who, brought to his end through lack of respect for the difference between meum and tuum, played on his fiddle and danced round the gallows tree to the tune of a song composed by himself the night before. A clan motto, e.g., "Stand fast Craigellachie," might well be written up in large letters in the room of any Highlander who finds his way in the future to Whitehall!—an inspiration to himself and a warning to others.

It may be objected that Cromwell's religion on some occasions carried him beyond the bounds of right conduct. This is true, but it confirms and does not weaken the argument. We are now considering the question of force or dynamic. The fact that the force sometimes carried him to excess shows how great was that force. It is true that wisdom should dominate all and should guide or moderate the force. Wisdom is dealt with in Part III below. Certainly there must be the restraint of common sense, otherwise, if effect is given to the suggestions in this part of the paper, we may have in Whitehall in the future not the cautious, conservative, unenterprising persons of the popular legend, but a set of Cromwellian despots. It might even happen that one of these men, listening in the official gallery of the Commons with growing impatience to the winding debate and the all too obvious arguments, might suddenly be seized with the very spirit of Isaiah and Zephaniah, and rising with his hat on his head might address the Speaker and members in the thunderous tones once used by Cromwell himself on a certain historic occasion.

### III.

The hours of leisure should be used to reach a higher standard of thought in a more lofty region. If we take the case of the official in the normal times of peace, his task is to apply the law as it stands, not some ideal standard of justice, and if he proposes to amend the law, he must often compromise with all sorts of outside bodies in order to reach an agreed Bill. the result being that his mind works in a zig-zag direction, like a destroyer avoiding torpedoes. In leisure he should learn to think in a straight line. At the same time the objects of thought in leisure should have some relation to the daily work. There should be interaction. An illustration will make the meaning clear. In 1937 the Ministry of Health had the task of framing a series of model building bye-laws. The problem was to frame a series sufficiently definite to withstand a challenge in a court of law, and sufficiently flexible to allow for advancing knowledge and scientific discovery. There was a number of conferences, presided over by the late Mr. E. H. Rhodes of the Ministry, at which the best available knowledge within and without the Government departments was brought to bear on the subject—scientific, engineering, architectural, administrative, legal. I have not the bye-laws by me now but, so far as I can remember, they took the following form. as finally agreed. The ends in view were laid down, stability, safety from fire, ventilation, and so on. There was a detailed specification of materials and methods, compliance with which would achieve these ends. But, if a person could satisfy the authorities that by the adoption of equally suitable materials and methods the ends of the bye-laws were achieved, he would be held to comply

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with the bye-laws. The question now arises—why should not this principle be applied in the larger spheres of religion and ethics? The ends of religion are the accepted Christian virtues. These ends are held to be attained along the lines of certain creeds and dogmas. The wise course is to follow these creeds and dogmas so far as a person can do so with a good conscience. But if he cannot conscientiously follow them (and some of them do call for amendment) then, if he satisfies the appropriate authorities that he can attain, or, better still, that he has attained, those virtues along different lines, he should be accepted as a good Christian within the Christian community. Similarly as regards ethics, which in the larger sense seem to me indistinguishable from religion, if we interpret ethics in the narrow sense as meaning customary morality, the application of the principle would lay more stress on ultimate ends and less on the observance of definite rules and conventions. In the result there would be a falling below average standards here and there, but there would be a marked increase in outstanding virtue, as there would be more scope for initiative and originality. John Milton, a contemporary and colleague of Cromwell, writes as follows in the *Areopagitica*, a pamphlet condemning the censorship of books. "If her waters (the waters of truth) flow not in a perpetual progression, they sicken into a muddy pool of conformity and tradition." "God sure esteems the growth and completing of one virtuous person more than the restraint of ten vicious." "In diminishing vice you diminish virtue." It would be well that municipal and other authorities in London and elsewhere, who exercise control over manners and morals, whether in regard to censorship of plays, amusements or otherwise, should bear in mind these words of Milton.

## CONTEMPORARY TOPICS AND REPORTS

### ORGANISATION AND CONTROL OF THE CIVIL SERVICE

*Report of Select Committee on National Expenditure and House of Commons Debate, 28th January, 1943*

The Reports of the Select Committee on National Expenditure have mainly been concerned with purely wartime issues, but in their recent enquiry into the organisation and staffing of Government Departments the Committee covered a field which included the past and future of the Civil Service.

After reviewing the work of the Ministry of Labour and National Service as the wartime recruiting agency for the Civil Service, the Select Committee turn to a consideration of two general problems :

- (i) The efficient and economic use made of the Civil Service ;
- (ii) The existing machinery for the direction and control of the Civil Service.

The Committee are extremely critical of the Treasury's handling of the first problem—at least so far as the period 1919–39 is concerned. They say “ In the period between the two wars the response of the Treasury to the demand that expert knowledge and study should be brought to bear on the problems of departmental organisation was meagre in the extreme. The control of Establishments remained in the hands of Civil Servants whose experience was for the most part limited to the procedure of the Departments in which they had served. . . . In your Committee's opinion, as far as the Treasury is concerned, the period from 1919 to 1939 was marked by an almost complete failure to foster the systematic study of organisation as applied to Government Departments.”\*

As a result of this neglect the outbreak of war found the Treasury insufficiently equipped to deal with the problems of administrative organisation forced upon them. There was, however, a gradual response and by July 1940 the staff of the Chief Investigating Officer had risen to 22, of whom 16 had been brought in from outside. By June 1942 the staff had increased to 46 and the section was renamed the Organisation and Methods Division. The Report gives considerable information about the sources from which the staff were recruited, the nature of their duties, etc. During 1941 and 1942 some 7 Departments set up Divisions on similar lines to the Organisation and Methods Division, and in certain cases secured the loan of the staff from the Treasury Division. The work of the Organisation and Methods Division is supervised by an advisory panel of three business men on a part-time basis.

The Select Committee welcomes this development and wishes to see it extended but make two criticisms of the present position :—

- (i) The work of expert investigation is mainly sectional in character and is largely restricted to the lower levels. It is not at present the practice to submit the general layout of Departments, and in particular the distribution of responsibility at the top, to periodical overhaul and review. Yet, the Committee point out, it is against the organisation at the highest departmental level that charges of conges-

\* Sixteenth Report of Session, 1941–42, H.C. Paper 120.

tion, duplication, insufficiency of delegation and slowness in reaching decisions are frequently brought.

- (ii) Establishment work as now understood ought properly to be ancillary to, and consequential on, Organisation and Methods work. Such matters as the recruitment, training, numbers, pay, grading, posting, promotion and cost of staff, as well as the management of office accommodation and appliances, ought to be determined by the nature of the organisation in which the staff has to serve. Therefore the men responsible for organisation must take precedence over and be able to give directions to the men responsible for working out staff requirements. This principle, the Committee urge, must be applied equally to the Treasury and the Departments.

The Select Committee next turn their attention to the question as to whether central control of the Civil Service should remain with the Treasury. They conclude that there is no evidence to justify the transfer of control from the Treasury. They desire, however, to improve the organisation of the Treasury in so far as it affects Establishments. Their principal recommendation here is that Establishment work should be separated from Supply at all levels below the Permanent Secretary; in other words, one of the two or more Second Secretaries to the Treasury would be exclusively concerned with the machinery of Government.

Below this person would be two Under Secretaries, one being head of the Organisation and Methods Division, and the other head of the Establishment Division.

The other important recommendation affecting the Treasury is that there should be a new Parliamentary Secretary concerned with Civil Service questions. He would be attached to the Treasury, but would also assist the Prime Minister in this field.

The Report of the Select Committee is full of suggestions and ideas, but only two other recommendations need be mentioned here. The Committee look forward to the creation of a Staff College to which picked members of the Administrative and Professional Grades, as well as promising members of the Executive and Clerical Grades, could be sent after a few years' service. The Committee do little more than outline the idea, and do not discuss in detail the need for such a college, how it might be organised, etc.

Finally, the Committee recommended the creation of a new Select Committee of the House of Commons which would conduct on behalf of the House a continuing review of the machinery of Government, with special reference to the economic use of personnel. The new committee should have an Assessor comparable in status with the Comptroller and Auditor General.

The Report from the Select Committee was discussed in the House of Commons on the 28th January, 1943, on the motion that the Report be now considered. The Motion was seconded by Mr. Arthur Woodburn, the Chairman of the sub-committee of the Select Committee responsible for collecting the evidence preparatory to the Report. In developing a little further the idea of a Staff College, Mr. Woodburn made it clear that he did not envisage a large building where civil servants would go to sit on velvet cushions for 12 months while they engaged in academic study. What was wanted, he said, was a director of studies to decide how people in the Civil Service could gain experience. It might be possible to use the services of some of the big firms, though there were also many experiences inside the Service itself from which people could learn.

As was to be expected, Mr. W. J. Brown had a great deal to say about the Report and its proposals. He praised the Civil Service for its probity and incorruptibility; its non-political character and its tradition of public service. He defended the Service against certain regular criticisms, *e.g.* that civil servants run to paper, but admitted there was room for reform. But Mr. Brown's ideas of reform were clearly not the same as those in the Report of the Select Committee. He was opposed to the view that the organisation and methods officer in the Department should be superior to the establishment officer, for then the human aspect would be subordinated to the mechanical aspect of administration: he would prefer both offices to be held by the same person. Mr. Brown was opposed to leaving the Treasury with central control of the Civil Service; he would prefer a properly constituted Personnel Department, based on the Civil Service Commission. Mr. Brown was also opposed to a Civil Service Staff College, and preferred the method of training and education within the Department, combined with a system which would make it easier for the boy entering the Clerical Grade to get to the top of the Service.

Other speakers in the Debate took up various points, but generally speaking, were against the proposal for a new Committee of the House to be concerned solely with the Civil Service.

Replying to the Debate, the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir Kingsley Wood) denied that the Departments had neglected the study of organisation and instanced developments in the Post Office, Board of Inland Revenue, and Ministry of Labour and National Service. Even in the business world, he said, the scientific study of organisation and method is comparatively new. The Government were in full agreement with the proposal that there should be an upgrading in status of work of the organisation and methods officers. He could not agree, however, that establishment work should be ancillary to organisation and methods work, and suggested instead that the principal establishment officer in each Department should be responsible for both personnel and organisation questions. Similarly as regards the Treasury, whilst he could not agree to a new Second Secretary he nevertheless felt that the Under-Secretary generally responsible should have two Principal Assistant Secretaries, one dealing with Establishment questions and the other with organisation. As regards the staff college, he proposed to start at once an investigation into the general question of the training of Civil Servants, including the question whether a staff college should be established and, if so, the particular form and character it should take. He could not accept the suggestions that there should be a Parliamentary Secretary and a Committee of the House concerned solely with Civil Service questions.

The Debate contained a number of candidates for a "Sayings of the Month" column. Here is a selection:—

"I was 25 years in private enterprise; I have known a great many civil servants; and I am not of the opinion that in private business the standard of efficiency is any higher than in the Civil Service."—*Mr. A. Woodburn.*

"In my opinion the Civil Service to-day is at least 50,000 larger than it ought to be."—*Mr. W. J. Brown.*

"It is very fortunate that the Prime Minister never came into the Civil Service. His educational qualification would have kept him in the clerical grade all his life, because he was a very bad student. . . . He and I might have been colleagues."—*Mr. W. J. Brown.*

"I have found . . . that criticism of the Treasury has swung from side to side. Sometimes the complaint has been that the Treasury goes too far in control



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and interference ; and then the wind has veered, and it has been said that the Treasury should go still further. I prophesy that it will not be long . . . before the wind shifts to the other quarter, and it is said that the Treasury should take more and sterner steps in supervision generally.”—*Sir Kingsley Wood*.

D.N.C.

### COMMITTEE ON THE TRAINING OF CIVIL SERVANTS

In the House of Commons on the 16th March Sir Kingsley Wood announced the establishment of a Committee under the chairmanship of MR. RALPH ASSHETON (Financial Secretary to the Treasury).

Other members are :—

SIR HAROLD HARTLEY	-	Vice-President, London Midland and Scottish Railway Company
SIR KENNETH LEE	-	Chairman, Tootal Broadhurst Lee Company Limited
MISS MYRA CURTIS	-	Principal, Newnham College, Cambridge
MR. A. J. T. DAY	-	Chairman, Staff Side, National Whitley Council
MR. A. L. N. D. HOUGHTON	-	Staff Side, National Whitley Council
SIR THOMAS GARDINER	-	Director-General, General Post Office
SIR ROBERT WOOD	-	Deputy Secretary, Board of Education
MR. H. WILSON SMITH	-	Under-Secretary, Treasury

The terms of reference of the Committee are :—

“To examine the general question of the training of civil servants, including the question whether a Staff College should be established, and, if so, the particular form and character which that College should take.”

### REFORM OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT—INTERIM REPORT OF NALGO RECONSTRUCTION COMMITTEE

In 1941 the National Association of Local Government Officers appointed an independent Committee of local government officers to consider the future development of local government. The Committee's interim report, dealing with the reform of the structure of local government, has now been issued by the National Executive Council of N.A.L.G.O., not as a statement of the Association's policy, but as an expert contribution which will serve as a basis for future discussion of the problem.

There are three outstanding recommendations made in the Report :—

(i) The setting up, in every area of England and Wales, of an “all-purpose” local authority equipped with the powers and financial resources to provide all municipal services;

(ii) The establishment of a permanent Local Government Boundary Commission to survey the whole of England and Wales and to divide it into suitable all-purpose local authorities; and

(iii) The creation of Provincial Councils composed of representatives elected by the all-purpose authorities in the provincial area, to plan and co-ordinate services which need for their adequate provision a wider area

or a greater population than the all-purpose authorities can provide individually.

The Committee feel that the present system of local government, while still capable of meeting<sup>8</sup> with substantial efficiency all the demands made upon it, possesses a number of serious defects which are likely, if not remedied, to militate against its full efficiency in dealing with the problems of post-war reconstruction and the expansion of the social services.

The major defect of the system, in the opinion of the Committee, and one out of which many of the lesser defects arise, is the existence of a large number of small local authorities lacking the population, financial resources and qualified staff to provide services of the standard and technical efficiency required to-day. Of the 1,530 local authorities in England and Wales, it is pointed out, 964—nearly two-thirds—serve populations of fewer than 20,000, while 249, including 63 boroughs and 149 urban districts, have populations below 5,000. An accompanying table shows that in the areas of 52 local authorities—14 of them boroughs—a penny rate produces less than £40 (in some cases it is as low as £12), while only 487—less than one-third of the total—have a penny rate product exceeding £400. Other outstanding defects are the lack of adequate machinery for co-operation between local authorities; the division and overlapping of services among them; the maladjustment between areas and functions of local authorities; and the absence of public interest in the operation of local government.

The Committee consider that only fundamental reform will effectively remedy these defects, and urge that such reforms should be planned now and implemented at the earliest possible date. "To wait until after the war will be too late, since by that time the burdens thrown upon local government are likely to be so great as to make extensive changes difficult."

"The principal objective of such reform should be the provision, in every area of the country, of all-purpose local authorities possessing sufficient population, financial resources, and administrative powers to enable them to administer all local government services within their areas." The Report points out the many advantages of associating services under unified control and management in the same area—notably the saving in overhead costs and the easier means of co-ordinating the services to cater adequately and efficiently for the needs of the citizen.

Combined with this objective, it states, there should be provision for effective co-operation between local authorities; co-ordination of services requiring wider areas than those of the proposed all-purpose authorities for their effective functioning; revision of areas and boundaries to meet changing circumstances; and the preservation and development of civic interest among all members of the community.

The proposed all-purpose authorities, it is suggested, should have populations ranging, in the main, between a minimum of 100,000 and a maximum of 500,000 (although these figures need not be rigidly applied in the case of sparsely populated rural areas or of existing county boroughs with populations over 500,000). In a mainly urban area, the whole area would be administered direct by the one all-purpose authority. Were this system to be applied to mainly rural areas, however, it would involve the disappearance of many historic boroughs and urban districts with a keen civic spirit—a policy to which the Committee are opposed. To preserve the best features of these smaller local authorities, while providing for their areas the advantages of large-scale co-ordinated administration, the committee recommends that the area of a mainly rural all-purpose authority should be grouped into suitable administrative units, to which the all-purpose authority would delegate purely local functions.

Each unit with over 20,000 population would have a directly-elected council empowered to conduct the services delegated to it in its own way. It would, however, remain under the effective control of the all-purpose authority, which would lay down minimum standards of service and prescribe standards of staff salaries and conditions. The council would, however, exercise a good deal of discretion and, if it wished to provide any service at a higher or more generous standard than the all-purpose authority, would be entitled to levy a special rate for the purpose.

Each administrative unit with less than 20,000 population would have a directly-elected district council acting as a committee of the all-purpose authority which would carry out the functions delegated to it by the all-purpose authority, while remaining under the control of that authority.

The purpose of the proposed Provincial Councils would be to plan and co-ordinate those services—such as town and country planning, hospitals, major highways developments, specialist and technical education, main drainage and sewage disposal, and water supply—which need a big area or a substantial population if they are to be provided efficiently and economically. They would have no executive powers and would not provide any services themselves; but their decisions would be binding on the all-purpose authorities in their areas. These Provincial Councils, the Report emphasises, would not be in any sense comparable with the present Civil Defence Regions. "We do not," says the Committee, "envisage any organ of local government at the regional level, considering such an organ altogether unsuited to local government."

The proposals are intended to refer to England and Wales only, excluding London. "We consider," the Committee state, "that the government of London presents so many problems of its own as to require separate consideration, while the local government system of Scotland is already so different from that which has developed in England and Wales as to be incapable of treatment on exactly the same lines."

## Reviews

### Reconstruction and Town and Country Planning

By SIR GWILYM GIBBON, C.B., C.B.E., D.Sc. The Architect and Building News. 15s.

EVERY member of the Institute will welcome Sir Gwilym Gibbon's latest volume.

In view of the universal interest now being taken in reconstruction and planning this book could not have been published at a more opportune moment, and the country is greatly indebted to Sir Gwilym for placing his long experience at the Local Government Board and the Ministry of Health at its service for the purpose of examining the position.

Anyone who has known Sir Gwilym or read his previous books will expect his contribution to be most valuable, and they will not be disappointed. After an interesting preface in which he emphasises that though planning is an essential instrument of modern technique, an instrument far too long neglected, but like many another modern method of treatment it can do serious harm if wrongly or too arrogantly applied, he gives his comments on the Uthwatt and Scott Reports. These comments coming from an administrator with Sir Gwilym's experience will be eagerly read by all concerned with local government administration.

Dealing first with the Uthwatt Report he approves of the Committee's recommendations for the wide extension of the powers of local authorities to acquire land compulsorily, but expresses doubt as to whether the Committee's suggestion that it should be left to the Arbitrator, after ascertaining the views of the parties, to decide whether he wants to hear the legal argument, or only to see the surveyors for each side, will be carried into effect. Many people will agree that it is undesirable that it should. Points of law will inevitably arise, and either party should have the right, if desired, of testing the accuracy of the surveyor's evidence by cross-examination.

Referring to the Committee's recommendations with a view to avoiding the multiplicity of notices he makes the point that the Committee may be going too far, with the result that individuals may feel disgruntled because they have not had a fair chance of knowing of proposals affecting them or of putting forward objections, and suggests that enabling owners to register themselves for individual notices as under the Planning Act of 1932, points the way to a solution. On the practical side the difficulty is that all owners who are professionally represented tend to register in respect of the whole of their properties with the result that the number of notices which have to be served becomes serious from the administrative point of view, while in many cases the owners are only affected to a very small degree by the bulk of the proposals with regard to which it is necessary to give them notice. If registration is to be the solution, the matters in respect of which notice must be given should be strictly defined and limited.

Sir Gwilym has some interesting comments to make on the Committee's proposals with regard to the acquisition of development rights in areas outside the towns. The tenth chapter of his book is devoted to a consideration of this remedy, and reasons are there given why in his opinion it should be emphatically rejected. Sir Gwilym does not think that these reasons are rebutted by anything said in the Report.

A point of interest to those concerned with local government is that emphasis is laid in the Report on the theme that development rights are acquired for

national planning. Sir Gwilym draws attention to the fact that the State having paid hard cash for the rights would be disposed to expect its pound of flesh in return, not always to the local or even national interests.

As regards the redevelopment of towns Sir Gwilym is sceptical of the principal cure prescribed by the Committee, namely, the acquisition of reconstruction areas, though he agrees there is a good case for granting local authorities general powers to acquire such areas with suitable safeguards. He doubts whether any Planning Authority would embark on a large number of reconstruction schemes with some possible exceptions. I am not sure that he is correct in this view. It is true that the powers relating to redevelopment areas in the Housing Acts have not been widely used, but it is probable that a different spirit will prevail after the war, and I think myself that if certain difficulties were removed much wider use would be made of powers on these lines, at any rate by the larger local authorities. Sir Gwilym prefers his scheme for the pooling of ownerships.

Sir Gwilym is also critical of the other main proposal of the Uthwatt Committee, namely, that for a levy on increases in site values in towns.

It is interesting to note that in his criticisms of the recommendation of the Uthwatt Committee that a Minister for National Development without departmental duties should be appointed, and that for day-to-day administration there should be a body on the lines of the War Damage Commission, Sir Gwilym states that the only straightforward sensible solution is an *ad hoc* government department with a Cabinet Minister at its head. The Government is evidently of the same opinion, as it has now introduced a Bill to set up such a department.

Sir Gwilym next deals with the Scott Report. His general criticism is that where the Committee appears to have failed is in some of the principal assumptions on which the Report is based. In his view the excellence of many of the trimmings is no recompense for serious faults in the garment itself. In this connection he criticises the assumption of the majority of the maintenance of a prosperous and progressive agriculture. He also criticises another assumption of the Committee that no striking change in the pattern of the countryside is to be expected. Again he draws attention to the Committee's recommendations with regard to the provision of urban services in rural areas. He asks if the Committee really examined with any thoroughness the probable cost of the services they advocate, not just a layman's guess, but figures with general knowledge and experience behind them.

After dealing with the Uthwatt and Scott Reports, Sir Gwilym has divided his book into four parts:—

Part I.—Land and Compensation.

Part II.—National, Regional and Local Planning.

Part III.—The Making of the Planner.

Part IV.—Post-War Realities.

Some of the principal subjects dealt with in Part I relate to Compensation and Betterment, Floating Values and State Ownership. Chapter VII Sir Gwilym devotes to Group Ownership, and here he develops the proposals he put forward in his previous book—"Problems of Town and Country Planning." He points out that what he had in mind was that all ownerships of land, in particular urban land, should be pooled over a wide unit preferably the economic unit of each locality, thus forming an ownership group or corporation. Each owner would have a share in the Group proportionate to the value of his property, and each property would be valued by the same body so as to ensure valuations on a uniform basis. The State would have no part in the ownership nor would the local authority, except that land owned by a public body as an ordinary owner, and not for a public purpose should be included in the pool.



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I notice that the Institute of Municipal and County Engineers in the Memorandum they have published on Post-War Planning and Reconstruction suggest, as regards small individual sites that the local authority should have power to require owners to pool their interests, and in case the owners disagree or fail to take appropriate action, the Planning Authority should have the power of acquisition, but as regards large-scale redevelopment they state it will probably be found that the pooling of ownerships and the carrying out of the work by private endeavour is not practicable. I must say that I agree with the Engineers in spite of the objections to State or municipal ownership to which Sir Gwilym draws attention. It would not be necessary for the local authority to acquire every individual property in a particular area, but only those which require redevelopment to fit in with the general scheme. It seems to me that it would involve far more work on the part of the local authority to settle a pooling scheme on the failure of owners to agree than it would be to acquire the property and lease portions back to such of the original owners who desire to remain in the area.

In this part of his book Sir Gwilym deals with many other matters of great interest at the present time including the acquisition of undeveloped rights now recommended so far as regards areas outside towns by the Uthwatt Committee. His view is that rather than raise some hundreds of millions of pounds for acquiring rights it would be better for the Government to open its fists to help urban reconstruction in a sensible way. He also devotes a chapter to new sources of land revenue in which he deals with the suggestions of a tax on land values.

Part II of the book is devoted to National, Regional and Local Planning, and includes chapters on the principles of planning, national planning, the location of industries and regional planning. Sir Gwilym lays it down that firstly planning schemes should provide primarily for the main outlines, secondly that the provisions of a scheme should be reasonably elastic, which means that a sensible measure of discretion should be allowed to the responsible authority, and thirdly that every plan of moment should be thoroughly and systematically overhauled say at least every ten years with some review after five. He has some weighty observations to make on local government and democracy, which it is to be hoped may be borne in mind by our legislators. He states "it is hopeless to expect democracy to flourish unless there is strong local government. Local government presents the best chance of disseminating widely throughout the electorate a sense of government . . . strong local government is possible only if it is entrusted with important functions carrying a heavy weight of responsibility."

In Chapter 19 Sir Gwilym gives his views as to what should be covered by central planning, and emphasises that one of the most important functions which must be performed by the central authority is that of imposing general standards in such matters as the number of houses to the acre, open spaces and road widths. He emphasises that it is national planning policy more than national planning that is needed, and that there is a world of difference between the two. He has a number of interesting observations on regional planning and deals specifically with the Manchester and London Groups.

On the question of community suburbs he comments favourably on the Wythenshawe and Speke experiments inaugurated by Manchester and Liverpool respectively, and considers there is more hope of progress on these lines than from the establishment of garden cities, pointing out that there is an enormous advantage in having a parent body with means, personnel and equipment to promote the growth of the daughter community.

Part III is devoted to the making of the planner. Sir Gwilym begins by stating that the best planners are born and not made, and that they are in the main self taught. He considers that there is one sphere in particular where the teaching of planning leaves much to be desired, namely, the social and

economic aspects of planning. He stresses the importance of the survey and points out that the ideal planner should know more than a little about the valuation of land and be a good negotiator, and concludes by saying that the ideal planner requires to be something more than an architect, engineer or surveyor, though each of the professions provides a useful basis.

Part IV is devoted to post-war realities and contains a great deal of practical advice. Amongst other matters dealt with are the return of the immigrants, including industries and other businesses as well as persons; the many calls there will be on public monies; priorities and the revision of planning procedure, whilst the possibility of making better use of temporary building is also discussed.

Through the whole of the book Sir Gwilym emphasises the importance of honest impartial research as the necessary forerunner of good planning. He constantly emphasises the danger of making over-hasty deductions from mere generalisations.

It is very difficult to do adequate justice to a book like this in the space available, but perhaps sufficient has been said to show that there are very few aspects of the matter upon which Sir Gwilym has not touched, and that the book is one which should be read by everyone interested in planning.

O. A. RADLEY

## The Press in the Contemporary Scene

The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, January 1942

THIS special number of the well-known publication of the American Academy of Political and Social Science devotes 175 pages to a series of 26 papers on various aspects of periodical publication in the U.S.A., classified under four main headings:—The Place of the Press in Modern Life; the Newspaper Pattern of To-day; the Press and Fields of Special Interest; Responsibilities and Reforms. By the word "Press" the newspaper is chiefly meant, but there is a good deal of interest on other aspects of communication by radio, pamphlet and magazine. The contributors are all specialists well qualified to write on their subject, and every one of their papers can be read with interest and with varying degrees of profit.

On the factual side there is enough to show how the newspaper has fared in recent years; how, for instance, competition is declining, so that of the cities publishing daily newspapers no less than 87.3 per cent. have but one newspaper, and the number of these single daily newspaper cities is steadily growing. It is unnecessary to stress the significance of such a fact in a continent the size of the U.S.A. where there cannot be national daily newspapers. There have been striking reductions in the number of salaried and wage-earning personnel of the Press, but individual average earnings have advanced. The share of national advertising secured by U.S. newspapers has dropped, not merely because national advertising has not fully recovered from the depression of the 'thirties, but because radio competition is absorbing more of the total. The public for the three main channels of communication and their receipts from national advertising (local advertising would multiply the receipts considerably) are:—

	NEWSPAPERS		RADIO		MAGAZINES	
Audience ... ..	40 millions	...	30 millions	...	140 millions	...
National Advertising Revenue...	\$161 millions	...	\$96 millions	...	\$151 millions	...
As percentage of total Revenue	38%	...	23%	...	36%	...

Syndication, a subject not very prominent in this country, is widely developed in the United States, and it will surprise many British readers to learn that a small country weekly can get all the material it can use from a national syndicate for as little as \$1 or \$2 a week. A small town daily newspaper would

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not need to spend more than \$35 a week for its feature stories, cartoons and comics.

Selling prices of U.S. newspapers have advanced, but regular subscribers in 1939 were still assured of a daily receipt of perhaps five or six editions as well as the large Sunday edition of their local paper for as little as 25 cents, while many paid no more than 15 cents or 18 cents.

A very interesting table shows the trend in newspaper contents as revealed by samples taken in 1910, 1920, 1930 and 1940. The size of newspapers has increased remarkably and, with it, there have been interesting changes in the relative distribution of space between the principal classes of content. A greater proportion of space is now given to business and economic affairs, to foreign news, to illustrations and comic strips and to society and women's interests.

These few samples cannot do more than indicate some of the many interesting features of the symposium. Nearly all aspects of the subject are touched upon, but some seem to deserve fuller discussion. The Washington Press conferences, particularly those of the President and the Secretary of State, the Washington and New York news-letters, the experiment of the U.S. Daily as a vehicle of government news, recruitment and training of journalists, are among the topics upon which more light would be welcome. There are one or two suggestive hints of what may be labelled the sociological study of the Press (*e.g.*, aspects of the psychological basis for the vogue of the popular but puerile comic strip which seems the best "read" feature by men and women alike) and it is to be hoped that they may provoke a further special issue of the "Annals" for which the present offers a very useful factual basis.

F. R. C.

### Politics and Political Organizations in America

By THEODORE W. COUSENS. New York. Macmillan, 1942, \$4

THE growing desire that we in Great Britain should know more about the history of the United States will no doubt develop into a desire to know more about the political system of the Federal Union; so different in many ways to our own. The available literature on the subject is vast, but there is room for this new work by Mr. Cousens, Associate Professor of Government and Law at Lafayette College. It does not pretend to be more than an introductory college text-book and, despite some shrewd remarks, it is not free from the sketchiness and inadequacies too often associated with such productions. Six hundred pages are not many in which to give a history of American parties from the foundation of the Republic to our own day as well as a survey of the political process as it now operates in the United States.

The difficulty of doing such a job well can only be appreciated by anyone who has endeavoured to follow in some detail the confused and tangled story of American internal politics during the nineteenth century. For any such Professor Cousens provides a useful outline and a guide to further readings. The section on the Political Process in America will be illuminating to the many who now find themselves puzzled to define such entities as the chairman of the party national committee, the party congressional and senatorial committees, state, district and county committees, the machine, the boss, the caucus, convention and the open and closed primaries. To these and other features of the American political scene Professor Cousens is a clear and useful guide. There are sufficient references to the vexed story of political patronage and the Civil Service, better known as the "spoils system," to provide a better knowledge of the process by which the American civil servant has been slowly redeemed from the accusation (made in 1859) that "the fact of a man's holding office under the government is presumptive evidence that he is one of three characters, namely, an adventurer,

an incompetent person, or a scoundrel." To be sure Sir Charles Trevelyan was little more complimentary to the British civil servant in his report, published six years earlier in England, but he did not have to grapple with so severe a state of demoralisation as that faced in the United States where Civil Service appointments became perquisites of a political party on a scale very much more extensive than in England.

F. R. C.

## The Middle Classes in American Politics

By ARTHUR N. HOLCOMBE. Harvard University Press, 1940. London: Sir Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press. 14s. net

THIS volume, by the Professor of Government at Harvard University, is a series of four papers written on various occasions and now revised and re-issued with a prefatory dissertation "In Defence of the American Way." The general theme is the reality and desirability of the ascendancy of the American middle classes as the controllers of America's political future. Holding that there is no immediately obvious economic basis upon which a definition of the middle class can be founded, Professor Holcombe observes that "a political class is mainly a state of mind," a proposition which he very plausibly supports by the results of a Fortune poll reporting (in 1940) according to which it was estimated that 79.2 per cent. of the population of the U.S. regarded themselves as of the middle class. This conclusion, he states, coincides with the opinion of practical politicians who have long known the aversion of most Americans to thinking of themselves as markedly different from the average man.

Professor Holcombe commends the political philosophy in Kent's essay on the "Natural Principle of the Political Order," concentrating rather upon its forecast of the evolutionary principle than upon its teleological basis. He naturally rejects the Hegelian development with its glorification of the Prussian monarchy of the first half of the nineteenth century, but his own use of the word "American" and his apparent considerable optimism and satisfaction with the present political situation in the United States sometimes suggests the suspicion that not so very unlike Hegel's, the validation of his political principles reposes upon a viewpoint determined by other than strictly philosophical considerations. It is not that one expects a muck-raking exposure of notorious business and political rackets from the chair of Government at Harvard, but to many, more closely involved in the arena, the point of view expounded may seem somewhat unduly detached from some of the grimmer manifestations of "middle class" politics in action.

Pointing, however, to basic principles and the deeper underlying forces determining political orientations, the book has a special merit at the present time. Rejecting crude theories of economic determinism and class warfare and suggesting the limitations of a specifically psychological approach ("à la Pareto") Professor Holcombe pleads for a political interpretation of history, suggesting by way of example that it would otherwise be impossible to account for the hundreds of years during which loyalty to Confucian principles resulted in the administration of the Chinese Empire not by lawyers, theologians or business men, but by students of political ethics.

Special attention must be drawn to the chapters on the Economic Basis of National Politics with its careful analysis of the six sections into which political America divides itself and the scholarly survey of class influence and alignments in the struggles during and after the Federal Convention of 1787. These are subjects which Professor Holcombe has made his own. Students of contemporary America will also welcome the inclusion of a thoughtful contribution to the volume, issued in 1939, devoted to the Fiftieth Anniversary of Bryce's "American Commonwealth."

F. R. C.

## Book Notes

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (AUSTRALIA), September, December, 1942; JOURNAL OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (NEW ZEALAND), September, 1942

THESE journals devote considerable space to the problems which will face the two countries when peace comes. Indeed, the New Zealand journal<sup>1</sup> has a foreword explaining that "the present issue is devoted to a study of the subject of the reconstruction of the public service after the war"; and it prints four papers on the subject. Mr. W. Machin deals with the subject under the heading "The Public Interest," and looks forward to the co-operation of public-spirited business men with broad-minded public servants in a social order where there will be all the necessary planning and control but not a fraction more. Mr. H. E. Combs puts the politician's point of view: he wants it made easier to dismiss the head of a department who does not respond with whole-hearted alacrity to the ideas and the programme of a newly-appointed political chief.

The papers by Dr. Leslie Lipson and Mr. F. B. Stephens cover the same ground as one another to a considerable extent and deal more closely with this question of the reconstruction of the public service. The study of public administration in New Zealand owes much to Mr. Stephens, the able editor of the journal, and he contributes a characteristically well-informed and well-balanced article on "The Public Service—To-day and To-morrow." Dr. Lipson, who went to New Zealand some four years ago to take charge of the Department of Political Science and Public Administration at Victoria University College, contributes "A University Viewpoint" which provides a most admirable survey of the problems of public administration in the three important fields of personnel, research and organisation. In all three fields he makes valuable contributions, and in the first, that of personnel, his remarks on education, in-service training, and selection for higher administrative responsibilities, are particularly worthy of the attention of those concerned with the efficiency and welfare of the public service, whether in New Zealand or elsewhere. He is perhaps a little too emphatic about the necessity of discovering potential higher officers before they are thirty-five: the principle is undoubtedly sound, and Dr. Lipson does well to emphasise it, but to make of it a hard-and-fast rule would surely be a mistake. Moreover, he seems not to appreciate sufficiently the difficulty of ensuring the high percentage of successes which the proposal demands or of dealing with the trouble arising from the inevitable percentage of mistakes, however low this may be kept. More care and thought are required in dealing with this aspect of his proposals for reconstruction before they can be regarded as approaching readiness for adoption.

The September number of the Australian journal is more concerned with the general aspects of social and government questions which will demand attention at the end of the war than with their administrative aspects. Professor E. Ronald Walker writes on "Social Security in Australia," and his paper would provide an excellent background for study of the Beveridge Report; Mr. T. H. Kewley in "Social Service Planning" stresses the need for much more research before planning can confidently be embarked upon; Mr. H. D. Black reviews "Social Progress in America," with special reference to the New Deal programme; and Professor F. A. Bland writes on "The Grant in Aid" as a means of saving the spirit of democracy from destruction by over-centralisation. Dr.



## PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

A. H. McDonald contributes an interesting paper on "Administration and Bureaucracy in the Greek World."

The December number of the Australian Journal contains an article by David E. Lilienthal, Chairman of the Tennessee Valley Authority, explaining how, in the various activities of that authority, an effort has been made, successfully he maintains, to avoid excessive centralisation of administration. A paper by Betty Henderson, which was awarded first prize in the Sir George Murray essay competition, reviews the government policy and action in connection with "Australian Primary Industries and the War": it has many points of interest, both economic and administrative, for readers in this country as well as in Australia. It shows the Commonwealth and the States feeling their way, very much in the dark, to a more co-ordinated and better illuminated policy and programme.

A. J. W.

## Beatrice Webb

WITH the passing of Beatrice Webb we have lost the greatest Englishwoman of our time. Her death also marks the dissolution of what she called "the firm of Webb," but which one would prefer to regard as a national institution, for there was nothing commercial about the partnership to which we owe so much.

This is not the place to assess the work of the Webbs in a general way; and Beatrice Webb's own activities were so extensive that it is impossible to describe them comprehensively in a few pages. I shall, therefore, confine myself to those aspects of her life which are likely to be of special interest to the readers of PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION.

Beatrice and Sidney Webb occupied a unique position in the worlds of thought and action. They were not academics, yet they exerted a great influence on teaching and research in the social sciences, not only by founding the London School of Economics and Political Science, but by the example of their own work. They were not professional politicians, yet they greatly influenced the course of politics during the present century, an influence by no means confined to the Labour movement. For example, Sidney Webb had a large share in drafting Balfour's Education Act, 1902; and all political parties were eventually converted to the need for abolishing the Boards of Guardians and breaking up the Poor Law, which was so powerfully advocated by the famous Minority Report of the Royal Commission. They were not administrators, yet they had a considerable influence on administration. Beatrice Webb would often say that when she wanted to know anything about a Department, she invariably asked the officials and not the Minister because they would know and he would not; and that when she wanted to get something done by a Department, she first endeavoured to persuade the official concerned. This recognition of the importance of administration enhanced its status and increased the interest shown in it.

The contribution of Beatrice Webb to the vast literary enterprises which made the name of Webb known all over the world, was principally that of organising the research. Her gift for investigation was remarkable. She planned the campaign, directed the secretaries and assistants, devised the methods, checked and collated the data, conducted the interviews, drained every possible source of information, and marshalled the vast store of information into a coherent unity.

Mrs. Webb was deeply interested in the science of social investigation and contributed to its advancement in "Methods of Social Study" and "My Apprenticeship." It was, indeed, something of a passion with her. "I watch myself falling back for encouragement," she wrote of her state of mind in 1889 "on a growing faith in the possibility of reorganising society by the application of the scientific method directed by the religious spirit." And in an entry in her diary of that year she declared, "Search after truth by the careful measurement of facts is the enthusiasm of my life. And of late it has been combined with a realisation of the common aim of the great army of truth seekers: the ennobling of human life."

One result of this attitude was that the Webbs' books set a new standard in thoroughness and reliability. People often disagreed with their conclusions, but no one ever questioned the facts or the comprehensiveness of the enquiry. How well founded is their reputation for industry, accuracy and integrity is

testified by the copious mass of notes occupying more than 150 boxes which they accumulated for a work on local government after 1835. This project was unfortunately never realised, and the boxes await some future historian in the British Library of Political Science. Despite the use of factual impedimenta on a monumental scale, the Webbs were always on top of their material and never submerged beneath it, an achievement which was largely due to Beatrice Webb's genius for organising research.

Another result was that the description, the narrative, the analysis or the argument in the Webbian writing always seems to emerge irresistibly from the material instead of the material appearing to be produced in support of preconceived ideas. This is what gives their work its force and persuasive power.

Another enduring feature of Beatrice Webb's work of great importance to social scientists and administrators (though here one cannot distinguish the specific parts played by her and "The Other One") lies in the choice of subject-matter.

Before the Webbs appeared on the scene most of the books dealing with the science of society concerned constitutional law and history, economic theory, anthropology and social philosophy. They were pioneers in subjecting trade unions, co-operative societies, boards of guardians, local authorities and similar organs to long years of patient study and disciplined thought. "The 'Webb speciality' (they wrote in 'Methods of Social Study') has been a study, at once historical and analytic, of the life-history of particular social institutions during the last three or four centuries, such as the trade union and co-operative movements in the United Kingdom, and English local government." How far-reaching the effect has been can be measured by the hundreds of titles devoted to these topics in the "Bibliography of the Social Sciences," and the attention given to them nowadays by even the most conventional writers of modern text-books. The Webbs succeeded to no small extent in shifting the centre of gravity from constitutional law, constitutional history and economic theory to the actual institutions which affect the lives of the mass of the people in a vital and intimate manner. This displacement had a twofold significance. On the one hand it led to a recognition of social institutions as a subject of serious study; while on the other it placed an emphasis on those institutions which are important to the bulk of the wage-earners and those of similar means. In this way the entire fabric of society came to be analysed in terms very different from those which prevailed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. All who are interested in public administration, whether as officials, students, teachers, or writers, are heavily indebted on this account to the Webbs.

Lastly, I will try to say something, however inadequate, of the personal qualities which characterised Beatrice Webb, and which cannot be gleaned from the "partnership" works or even from her autobiography.

It was scarcely possible to come into friendly contact with Beatrice Webb without being struck by her brilliant conversation, her powerful intellect, her natural dignity, her independent judgment, her strong convictions, her charm of manner. Nor could one fail to discern the background of culture, wealth, spacious living and opportunity which lay behind her.

What few people discerned was that somewhere below the surface there was an artistic strain in Beatrice Webb. There is a passage in "My Apprenticeship" which suggests that she could have been an imaginative writer if she had been so minded. "This last month or so I have been haunted by a longing to create characters and to move them to and fro among fictitious circumstances. To put the matter plainly—by the vulgar wish to write a novel. . . . I see before me persons and scenes; I weave plots, and clothe persons, scenes and plots in my own philosophy. There is intense attractiveness in the comparative ease of descriptive writing. Compare it with work in which movements of commodities,

percentages, depreciations, averages and all the ugly horrors of commercial facts are in the dominant place, and must remain so if the work is to be worthful." The autobiography in which this extract from her diary appears is a work of considerable literary quality; and one imagines that the same is true of much of the great diary occupying 40 volumes which was her confidential companion throughout her life. She greatly enjoyed listening to good music; and she remarked a short time ago to a professional musician who was staying with her that if she had not been a political scientist she would like to have been an instrumentalist.

But these are not the qualities which stand out most when I look back on the many years of friendship I was privileged to enjoy. I think rather of the zest and interest in life which she retained undiminished to the end, and which endowed her with perennial youth even in advanced old age. I think of her subjective love of people, which contrasted so vividly with her seeming indifference to the fate of millions when objective historical events or future possibilities were under discussion. I think of her interest in young men and women, the help and encouragement she gave them, her sense that the future lay with them. I think of her gift for abiding friendship, the ever-welcoming hospitality which made her house at once an intellectual focus and a radiating centre of new ideas for so many years.

WILLIAM A. ROBSON

## *Administrative Aspects of the Beveridge Report:*

### **The Comprehensive Health Service Assumption B of the Beveridge Report**

By RALPH M. F. PICKEN, M.B., Ch.B., B.Sc., D.P.H.

*(Mansel Talbot Professor of Preventive Medicine,  
The Welsh National School of Medicine)*

AMONG three prerequisites to a satisfactory scheme of social security the Beveridge Report includes what is known as Assumption B, viz., the establishment of comprehensive health and rehabilitation services for prevention and cure of disease and restoration of capacity for work, available to all members of the community.\* It is stated to be a logical corollary to the payment of the high benefits in disability proposed in the plan for social security that determined efforts should be made by the State to reduce the number of cases for which benefit is needed. The Report argues that it is preferable to pay for disease and accident openly and directly in the form of insurance benefits, rather than indirectly, because the cost is thereby emphasised and prevention will thus be stimulated. Importance is therefore attached to preserving the contributory principle established by National Health Insurance in relation to medical treatment. It is proposed that all persons employed under contract and all other

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gainfully occupied persons (including such housewives as are so employed or occupied), and other persons of working age not gainfully occupied shall be contributors, and that in virtue of their contributions and those made by employers on behalf of the employed all members of the community will be entitled to receive medical service without a treatment charge. Medical service is described as meaning whatever medical treatment is required, in whatever form it is required, domiciliary or institutional, general, specialist or consultant, and includes also the provision of dental, ophthalmic and surgical appliances, nursing and midwifery and rehabilitation after accidents.

As safeguards against abuse and carelessness on the part of beneficiaries the advisability of making some additional charges specifically for board (as distinct from treatment) in hospital and for provision or repair of appliances of various kinds is mentioned. Apart from these possible extra charges the entitlement to benefit would ensue from insurance contribution toward the cost of the comprehensive service amounting, on the basis of the assumed post-war value of money, to 10d. weekly on behalf of a man, 8d. for a woman and lesser sums for adolescents. The income from these contributions would yield about £40 millions in 1945. While it was not found possible to estimate with accuracy the total cost either of all the existing medical services or of the new proposals, it is thought that annual charges on local and national exchequers for existing health services outside insurance would amount to about £60 millions post-war, whereas the new comprehensive service might cost the State £170 millions, less the £40 millions yield of insurance. Subsidy from taxes and rates would therefore be required to the extent of about £130 millions per annum, an increase of about £70 millions over the burden of the present services on public funds. The cost of the expanded services would thus be met only very partially from insurance contributions.

On the administrative side, the Beveridge Plan contemplates that the health services would be organised by a department or departments, not concerned with social insurance, to which that portion of the income from contributions earmarked for medical services—the hypothetical £40 millions—would be transferred. The sole interest of the Ministry or Department of Social Security would be “in finding a health service which will diminish disease by prevention or cure, and will ensure the careful certification needed to control payment of benefit at the rates proposed in this Report.” Details of the scheme, it is suggested, should be the subject of further immediate investigation, but the ideal from the standpoint of social security is stated to be “a health service providing full preventive and curative treatment of every kind to every citizen without exceptions, without remuneration limit and without an economic barrier at any point to delay recourse to it.”

The Report indicates that the universality and comprehensiveness of the envisaged health service based on an insurance system would bring about two fundamental changes. Private practice in medicine, though not necessarily abolished, would be so diminished in scope that it might not appear worth while to preserve it; and the substitution of compulsory State insurance contributions for voluntary contributory schemes entitling contributors to free hospital treatment would remove an important financial resource of the voluntary hospitals and make them largely dependent upon grants from the Social Security Fund or from national or local exchequers, or from all three.

## GOVERNMENT PRONOUNCEMENTS

Before considering the medical, social and administrative problems arising from the Beveridge proposals, it is necessary to try to ascertain whether they



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have been supplemented by anything more concrete. Has the Government adopted the proposals contained in Assumption B? The Report speaks of "the health departments" as handling the service and leaves it at that. Who or what are the health departments? And how is the money from various sources to reach the point of expenditure? The answers to these questions will obviously affect, if not actually determine, the nature of the service.

On 16 February, 1943, Sir John Anderson told Parliament that the Government welcomed the Beveridge conception of a reorganised and comprehensive health service, but that details would be discussed by the "health departments" with organisations—local authority, voluntary or professional—on whose active participation the success of any reorganisation must depend. The ultimate responsibility for seeing that in any area the service was full and efficient must be on one public authority, and experience justified the adoption for this purpose of the local government machinery, working often over larger areas and certainly in consultation and collaboration with voluntary agencies. Professional interests must be amply and properly safeguarded. It was necessary to maintain to the greatest possible extent the principles of free choice of doctor and the family doctor relationship, but this need not be inconsistent with group public practice and well-equipped clinical centres. There was no intention to force the new services on those who preferred to make private arrangements for medical attendance or hospital treatment, and the position of the great voluntary hospitals must be safeguarded. In reply to a question Sir John stated that the scheme was comprehensive in two senses: it would cover all forms of treatment and it would extend throughout the community. On 17th February Sir Kingsley Wood stated that responsibility for the comprehensive medical service must lie with the Minister of Health. On 18th February Mr. Herbert Morrison stated explicitly that the Government accepted the assumption in the Beveridge Report of a comprehensive health service, on the basis of universality, free benefit, no means test, medical reorganisation, and so on. The Government thought it right to intimate that it did not propose to destroy the institution of voluntary hospitals.

Some further inkling as to what is in the Government's mind was given as far back as 9th October, 1941, when Mr. E. Brown, Minister of Health, stated in Parliament the broad principles of the Government's hospital policy. The duty would be laid on the "major local authorities" (presumably county and county borough councils) of securing, in close co-operation with the voluntary agencies, the provision of a comprehensive hospital service by placing on a more regular footing the partnership between the local authorities and voluntary hospitals. Such a service would need to be designed by reference to areas substantially larger than those of individual local authorities. The aim would be to secure the provision of the more highly specialised services at teaching hospitals and other centres selected to serve these wider areas and by arranging for a proper division of function between hospitals in these areas. In so far as any new burden might be thrown upon local authorities in providing or maintaining hospital accommodation, or in contributing toward the expenditure of voluntary hospitals, a financial contribution would be made by the Exchequer. Special educational grants to teaching hospitals were contemplated.

From these pronouncements it may be deduced (1) that Assumption B of the Beveridge Report has been accepted by the Government, although not necessarily everything that is implied in it; (2) that the Minister of Health will be responsible for planning the scheme in detail; (3) that the scheme is intended to be operated through local government machinery; (4) that local areas of administration are to be bigger than those of most, if not all, of the existing major authorities; (5) that that part of the cost which is not met out of the

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Social Security Fund or voluntary moneys will be borne partly by the national and partly by local exchequers; and (6) that all or part of the grants to be made to voluntary hospitals are to reach them through local authority machinery. The Minister of Health has, in fact, been given the task of discussion and negotiation with the bodies concerned. He has already for some time been conducting a survey of hospitals throughout the whole country, which has a bearing on local areas of administration.

### THE MEDICAL POINT OF VIEW

The problems of administration must be considered within the framework of these pronouncements if they are to be brought into relation with reality. But it is important first to try to assess the state of medical opinion as to the future of medical practice and the way in which it should be managed. This is not easy, since views are fluid on some important points; since they are influenced by the type of practice different groups have been accustomed to pursue; and since, the profession being a substantial cross-section of the general population, these views may sometimes reflect the tenets of one or other political creed. Nevertheless, as the result of much consideration of the subject by the profession during the past fifteen years, what may reasonably be regarded as representative majority opinion is ascertainable. It is contained in several publications, of which the most representative are probably the Proposals for a General Medical Service for the Nation, published by the British Medical Association in 1930 and revised in 1938, and the Interim Report of the Medical Planning Commission of 1942.

It may be noted that, if we exclude medical practitioners at present in the Fighting Services and those who are not in effective practice as doctors, more than two-thirds of the men and more than a half of the women are now engaged in general, special or consultant practice and derive little of their income from salaried employment. If, further, we disregard the recently qualified who are holding short-term appointments in hospitals, as an informal extension of medical training, and who would normally be distributed thereafter according to the existing proportions found in other avenues of medical life, the general, consulting and specialist practitioners form a substantially higher ratio of the total than that stated. Again, apart from the young practitioners with experience limited to a brief period in hospital, the great majority of the large number of medical men and women at present serving in the Forces consists of general, special and consultant practitioners. These are the people whose occupations will be most profoundly affected by the putting into effect of Assumption B. The Fighting Services, however, contain a high proportion (probably more than one-fourth of their medical strength) of the young practitioners mentioned above, but it would be a mistake to over-estimate their numerical importance in the profession; they probably represent less than a tenth of the whole body of active practitioners. Nevertheless their absorption into civilian life at the termination of hostilities will be a major problem.

Professional opinion can be judged with fair accuracy among those who have not been recruited and who have very widely taken part in discussions and in the formulation of medical policy during the past few years. There is a good deal of evidence that Service medical officers formerly in established practice are thinking much as their fellows do. It is difficult to assess the views of the young, unestablished men and women, but they are likely to be both less definite and less conservative. With these explanations and reservations, it may be said that there is a large measure of agreement on certain points.\* These

\* In what follows an attempt is made to present what appears to be the corporate opinion of the profession, not the purely personal opinions of the writer.

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are:—(1) that the present overlapping of medical services, both preventive and curative, should be removed and the tendency to create new, separately managed and independent services for the people in relation to their age or occupation or a particular disease or disability from which they may suffer should cease; (2) that a comprehensive medical service, preventive and curative, should be provided for those members of the community who comprise the present insured persons, their dependants and others of like economic status; (3) that the central administrative control of such a service should be concentrated in one governing body; (4) that local management should be over wide areas and not in the hands of local authorities as at present constituted; (5) that there should be co-ordination of the work of voluntary and municipal hospitals within these wide areas; (6) that the medical profession should have a substantial say, through its representatives, in both central and local management; (7) that patients should be free to choose their own general practitioner, and he should have the right to refuse them as patients; (8) that remuneration should be otherwise than by whole-time salary and bear a closer relation to the work involved and the standards desired than has obtained under National Health Insurance; and (9) that compensation should be made for the loss of the selling value of private general practices which would result from the great increase in beneficiaries under such a scheme.

Special attention may be drawn to certain points. Firstly, apart from those medical practitioners who already hold whole-time posts, the great majority of the rest of the profession appear to be antagonistic to whole-time salaried service. They regard it—and probably with reason—as totally incompatible with the free choice of doctor which the Government desires to preserve. They believe firmly in the value of the personal relationship between doctor and patient and cannot conceive how it could be preserved in a salaried service offering equal opportunities for leisure to its officials regardless of the extent to which their services as individuals might be in demand. They think that work which takes a medical man or woman into the homes of the people, involving the closest intimacy in matters about which individuals often refrain from speaking to their own relatives, might not lend itself to impersonal service among a people with our traditions. They fear, also, that such a service would lead to the creation of a hierarchy of officials holding administrative, and what would be regarded as higher, posts, to the detriment of the quality of clinical practice. They are not, on the whole, favourably impressed with the quality of domiciliary medicine where it has been practised on a whole-time salaried basis, as in some places under the Poor Law. While they recognise that the administration of a whole-time salaried service would be neater and easier, they consider that efficiency and progressiveness in clinical medicine should not be sacrificed for administrative convenience, as they think it would be. They have noted that the salaried health services have, latterly at least, not been attracting a large proportion of the best male graduates from medical schools, and they apprehend that a general salaried service might react unfavourably on recruitment to the profession. Most general practitioners seem to favour a service in which remuneration would depend to some extent on the number of individual members of the community who would choose them as medical advisers. This might be attained by a system of capitation fees combined with a basic salary for their services in connection with the present clinic work of local authorities transferred to them, and for other non-personal or non-clinical activities. No scheme seems to have been worked out for the remuneration of consultants, but the inclination appears to be toward part-time salaries and fees for special items of service. It is assumed that, whatever danger of abuse may be anticipated and however difficult it may be to devise safeguards, sanction to practise privately must not be refused to those practitioners, both general and special, engaged in the service.

Secondly, the profession has by no means accepted the proposition that the so-called "health centre" should take the place of the doctor's own consulting room or surgery. The special facilities of centres for certain types of examination, and for the conduct of the clinics now part of the personal health services, would probably be welcomed, but there is grave doubt as to whether patients would willingly be diverted entirely to them or whether it is desirable that they should. It is notable that in small towns where medical practitioners often collaborate, and even where there is a cottage hospital to which they are all attached, patients are not usually so congregated although it might be convenient for the doctors. Nevertheless, the idea might prove more attractive if hospital beds under the care of general practitioners were provided at these centres, and they were also to take over responsibility for much of the clinic work at present administered by local authorities. They are experimentally minded and are not disposed to be launched into a new system which has not yet been tried in any part of this country.

Thirdly, the profession is strongly of the opinion that, in so far as it is to be answerable to Government, there should be one controlling and co-ordinating central body. This would involve a much bigger scheme of unification of the medical functions of central Government departments than took place in 1919. It would, in fact, entail the full acceptance as regards medicine of the principles laid down in the Haldane Report of 1918.\* Many go further, however, in advocating a corporate or semi-autonomous body, instancing as an example the Assistance Board which administers without constant Ministerial control a service financed out of public moneys. It is recognised that this traverses the canons of democratic government, but they argue that the administration of a service continuously open to questions in Parliament put to a departmental Minister may be timid, captious and rigid. In any case whether central administration be departmental or corporate they firmly believe in the desirability of providing that medical men and women who are not permanent officials of a department should take a part in moulding the policy of the central body.

Fourthly, the profession is extremely apprehensive of control by local authorities. This may be partly due to the predilection of these bodies for whole-time salaried service, but it is also derived from the doctors' experience of other types of organisation, such as National Health Insurance and voluntary hospitals, which give them a greater say in the formulation of medical policy and in the day-to-day management of medical affairs. Moreover, it is apparent that local government boundaries cut across the natural lines of flow of patients to hospitals and other medical centres, and that most local authorities—even those now described as "major"—administer areas which are too small for a comprehensive medical service including properly classified hospital and consultant centres. There is a feeling that a radical measure of reform of local government ought to precede the inauguration of a comprehensive medical service, if local authorities are to be responsible for its management. The profession, however, is attached to the idea of large regions, based as far as possible on medical school centres, with statutory co-ordinating bodies composed of representatives of local authorities, voluntary hospitals and other interests, including medical practitioners and some nominees of the central authority. These bodies would have access to the central authority and advise on the allocation of exchequer grants and moneys from the Social Security Fund and possibly also collect and distribute regional voluntary contributions. This idea presumably involves the retention by individual major authorities and voluntary hospitals of a measure of autonomy in institutional as well as other provision and manage-

\* Report of the Machinery of Government Committee (Cd. 9230) 1918. Reprinted 1938.

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ment. The general view is that minor local authorities should cease to have health functions. It is recognised that the block grant system introduced in 1930 has partially raised a barrier to this regional type of control so far as some of the health and medical services are concerned. No definite opinion has been expressed on the alternative of joint boards, but it can safely be assumed that they would be unacceptable to the profession in the form provided for in Section 8 of the Public Health Act, 1936. Boards so constituted apparently may not contain members who are not also members of the constituent local authorities. It will be remembered that the Cancer Act, 1939, enables a joint body set up for the purpose of preparing and administering cancer schemes to co-opt non-local authority members if they so desire. The profession would certainly regard it as imperative that the presence on a Joint Board of members who are not elected members of local authorities, but who have special knowledge and experience of medical, health and hospital problems, should be obligatory, and that some medical practitioners included among them should be nominated locally by the profession. Because of the modern extent of local subsidy from the Exchequer of all local government functions, the view is also taken that such bodies should contain some Government nominees. Whatever form of local governing body should be evolved, opinion is strongly in favour of a local medical advisory committee to which major medical questions should stand referred for opinion.

Fifthly, the medical profession has not declared itself as willingly accepting a service for the whole population irrespective of income. As far as can be judged, opinion on the subject is about equally divided, but, again, if those at present in whole-time employment are excepted, it seems likely that a majority is against the inclusion of the hypothetical ten per cent. of the population above the present Health Insurance income limit of £420 per annum. It is possible that if the whole Beveridge plan of Social Security were definitely adopted by the Government and the administrative measures outlined above were embodied in the scheme for giving effect to Assumption B the opposition would diminish. It seems clear, however, that some members of the community, although they are contributors, will desire to have their medical care outside of such a scheme, and provision will have to be made for it. In spite of the obvious difficulties in allowing medical practitioners within a service the right to private practice, the profession is definitely, and probably rightly, against any system which would foster the growth of a separate group of practitioners standing outside the service and holding themselves out to practise medicine at a higher level and solely free to charge fees for their attendance. This would afford dangerous encouragement to behaviour bordering on charlatanism.

### THE ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEM

It is evident that there are incompatibilities between the Government's proposals and the views of the medical profession. While the Government desires to preserve free choice of doctor it seems to be firmly attached to health centres as the nuclei of the service and, according to a statement in the medical journals of 22nd May, 1943,\* to favour a salaried service which would usually be whole-time. So far, the profession is unconvinced about the health centre policy and firmly opposed to whole-time salaried service for the work of general, consultant and specialist practice. The Government does not propose to deprive the public of its right to obtain medical advice outside the national scheme, but whole-time service would apparently preclude any practitioner serving under the scheme from giving it. This cleavage between two groups of practitioners with the

\* *Brit. Med. Jour.*, 1943, 1, 641.



same qualifications and offering the same type of medical attention is unacceptable to the profession. On the administrative side the profession urgently desires a reform which will abolish the separatism in medicine which has arisen from the establishment and control of services by a number of central Government departments, including the Ministry of Health, the Board of Education, the Board of Control, the Home Office (now the Ministry of Labour) and, in war-time, the Ministry of Supply and the Ministry of Fuel and Power. It regards this reform as fundamental and considers that it should take precedence over any other proposals, but the Government has made no statement on the subject. Again, the profession is reluctant for its members to be brought into contractual relationship with local authorities, but the Government has definitely stated its intention of operating the scheme through local government machinery. Briefly, the proposals of the Government are revolutionary as regards medical practice, but, so far as is known, evolutionary and unadventurous in administration.

Whatever may be the inter-departmental difficulties, it is desirable that the medical organisations of the various Government departments should be reviewed. The object might be to create one central body responsible for a comprehensive health service which would take within its ambit both the promotion of health and the prevention and treatment of disease. It is not sound policy, for instance, to draw a sharp dividing line between school and domiciliary influences on the health of school children, or between the familial and occupational factors affecting tuberculosis. Probably, about 80 per cent. of sickness absenteeism among the employed has no special relation to their type of employment. It is unprofitable to deal with these problems in compartments. Where departments are concerned with special health risks they might be advised by the body primarily concerned with health, members of the latter's staff being seconded, if necessary, as their regular investigators and advisers. If it is decided that most of the executive medical work is to be delegated to some type of local body, serious consideration should also be given to the practicability of the devolution to it of medical functions now exercised centrally. The establishment of a central corporate body might ease some of the departmental difficulties, as well as meeting the preference of the medical profession.

A similar unification should be secured in local areas. In a considerable measure it exists for the present health services, since the medical officer of health's department often advises the various committees of the local authority in health and medical matters and manages their medical services. The difficulties arising from the separate or dual functions of different types of authorities in counties are too well known to require elaboration. For these there is no satisfactory remedy but a major reform of local government, and it would be idle to pretend that a new comprehensive medical service can be successfully fitted into this mosaic. Such a reform, however, is not practicable within what appears to be the Government's time-table for implementing the Beveridge scheme of Social Security. The easiest course is to create joint boards of the type provided for in the Public Health Acts. This in itself would not unify health administration without amendments of the law which now apportion health and medical duties among not only county and county borough councils but also county district councils, and places responsibilities on some of their committees which do not exist primarily for public health purposes. The joint board machinery would have to be of different construction from that provided for in existing law if any attempt were to be made to satisfy the medical profession and create order out of the present chaos. It may be said at once that a purely co-ordinating body is not practicable unless the profession were content to be under contract with the constituent local authorities, which they are not. Yet, if the voluntary hospitals, and possibly the individual major local

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authorities, are to retain some autonomy in hospital management, the new local body cannot be entirely executive.

Pending a reform of local government, and perhaps as part of a first four-years' plan, these difficulties might be got over by the creation of an entirely new type of local, areal or regional board. In this connection it may be emphasised that the modern system of financing local services has weakened the ratepayers' right to demand complete control over all local services. Already before the war county councils derived substantially more of their revenue from Government grants than from county contributions, and in county boroughs the ratio of grant to rate revenue was rather more than two to three. The Government's proposals for hospital administration will bring voluntary hospitals under the common administration with their capital assets and presumably some continuing voluntary revenue. There is a case, therefore, not only for *compelling* joint action over areas wide enough for effective administration, but also for departing from the precedents that all members must be elected members of local authorities, and that, when persons who are not local councillors have a place, they should not exceed one-third of the total and should be co-opted at the will of the elected. If these changes can gain acceptance, the aim should be to reduce the number of local areas of administration so as to ensure that each new authority can manage as complete and comprehensive a health and medical service as possible; to constitute boards as small as possible in personnel; and to provide that the members represent voluntary hospitals, professional and technical knowledge, and the Government, as well as existing local authorities. It would probably be found that the medical profession would be less reluctant to enter into contracts with such a body. So far as medical practitioners are concerned it would be the only executive body, though it might have to make arrangements for its staff to serve the constituent authorities if they retained some autonomy in health and medical matters.

The Government would also be wise to make every effort to find other means of providing medical care than by means of a service definitely designed to become whole-time. If a whole-time service is inevitable it should be given time to prove so; it should not be imposed on theoretical grounds or for administrative convenience. The capitation system for a general practitioner service has proved workable. If it has in a certain number of cases and in certain places given rise to some difficulties of medical certification there are other means of dealing with that problem. In any case it would be a greater danger to the public health if medical men and women were to find that their careers within a salaried service depended, even partly, on the practice of a deterrent attitude in the matter of certification. Apparently no detailed scheme has been worked out for remuneration partly by salary and partly by capitation fee as suggested in the Interim Report of the Medical Planning Commission.

Lastly, it should not be assumed that communal centres, to the exclusion of personal consulting rooms and surgeries, are essential to a progressive and efficient type of general and consulting practice. The advantages are very obvious. There may also be disadvantages. For one thing, many patients may not like these centres. For another, they might lead rapidly to a measure of specialisation in practice which would destroy the personal relationship with patients which is characteristic of British medicine. This may be inevitable, but it should not be assumed to be so. The scheme for future medical services should foster experiments in group practice. It may be found that the best field for them is in those urbanised districts where practitioners already work together at small hospitals, but they ought to be tried in different kinds of area. It would, in fact, be sound policy to devise a scheme which is evolutionary both as regards medical practice and administration. At present there are too many unknowns in the equation.

# The Comprehensive Health Service

## Assumption B of the Beveridge Report

By NORMAN WILSON

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SIR WILLIAM stated his belief (para. 437) that from the standpoint of social security the ideal is "a health service providing full preventive and curative treatment of every kind to every citizen without exceptions, without remuneration limit and without an economic barrier at any point to delay recourse to it." Such a service, therefore, he suggested, should be provided as one of the benefits guaranteed by the payment of the compulsory insurance contribution which forms the basis of his plan; part of the contribution going towards the cost of the service.

During the debate in the Commons in February, 1943, on his Report the Government announced its general acceptance of the recommendations in regard to the creation of such a comprehensive health and rehabilitation service. Though its spokesmen dealt in general terms, certain intentions of the Government were made clear. These were as follows: voluntary hospitals and "other voluntary agencies" are to remain in existence; private practice of medicine is to continue; ultimate responsibility for the efficiency of the service is to be placed on the "well-trying local government machinery, working very often over larger areas"; the service is to be available for all, irrespective of incomes; and benefits, hospital treatment "and so on" are to be free and obtainable without a means test.

Sufficient was said to enable some observations to be made upon the administration of the scheme.

It is clear that the Government is going to continue the present central-local partnership in administration, and not to place the whole responsibility for the extended service upon either a department like the Ministry of Health or a semi-independent body like the Assistance Board. A good case could be made out for the abandonment of the existing arrangement. The prevention, cure and alleviation of sickness is of national and not only local concern, however large the locality might be made, and the facilities provided by the service should be uniform throughout the whole country. Responsibility at present is scattered among hundreds of local authorities. Their widely varying levels of financial ability, administrative capacity and—not least important—belief in public services is matched by widely varying levels of adequacy in the services they provide. Even though the number of responsible authorities may be materially reduced by the creation of larger and consequently more satisfactory areas of administration, differences in the range and quality of their services will continue to exist, and may be very great. The greater the degree of responsibility left with local authorities, the greater the degree of disparity. A reduction in this disparity can only be effected by a reduction in local responsibility. It is a matter of deciding which is the more important: a national service (which postulates uniformity) or local responsibility (which involves diversity). To choose the one must be to reject the other.

My own view is that the first alternative is the one that matters, especially as I do not think that the single responsibility of a central organ need be incompatible with popular control working through suitable machinery. But the bulk of opinion is against me; and in any case the Government's reliance is to continue to be upon a division of responsibility between itself and locally elected bodies, diminished though they may be in number.

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The case for the creation of larger units of local administration has been examined so thoroughly in recent years that there is no point in going over it again here. There is substantial agreement on the need for such units if many services are to be undertaken more efficiently or more comprehensively than they are now. Advocates of the "all-purposes" authority are, I imagine, in the majority; but the arguments of those who favour the *ad hoc* body have considerable force. It is said, with justification, that an area which may be such, in all respects, as to be able to provide satisfactorily all its health services may be unsuitable in many ways for the best provision of passenger transport. Nevertheless, the case against the *ad hoc* authority is strong, and it may be assumed that the Government's plans are for the creation, where necessary, of the all-purpose type of authority and for the device of joint action with other authorities when an area is not the best for certain purposes. It may also be assumed, no doubt, that the size of an authority will be so fixed as to be best able to provide its social rather than its trading services, where technical efficiency is more important than public direction and co-operation.

Most of the schemes recently proposed for a reformed medical service (e.g., those of the Medical Planning Commission and of the Labour Party) stress the prime importance of the general practitioner as the "first line of defence" against disease. They recognise also that the day of the general practitioner, working in semi-isolation in his own home, keeping his own records, and often without sufficient, or sufficiently modern, equipment, is or should be over. Groups of general practitioners, therefore, should work at and from health centres, provided and equipped by the local authority. The number of such centres would depend upon area and population, but sufficient doctors should be attached to each to allow of a reasonably wide choice of doctor by the patient (say ten to twelve). Doctors would attend the centre to see their patients and pay domiciliary visits from it. Dental treatment, and such auxiliary services as chiropody and U-V rays, would be available at the centre. Health nurses, midwives and other visitors would work at and through it. All records would be kept and statistics compiled there.

The medical staff would be responsible for the maternity and child welfare and school medical work now carried out very largely by the non-specialist, full-time members of public health staffs. Specialised branches such as tuberculosis, venereal diseases and orthopaedics would be undertaken by specialist staffs either at these centres or at special clinics.

Each centre should have its own organs for internal administration: (a) medical superintendent responsible for supervising day-to-day medical work, senior dental officer, chief health nurse and supervisor of midwives, and lay administrator; (b) an elected committee, representative of the different sections of the staff, to consider internal organisation, professional problems and so forth; and (c) a committee consisting of one elected representative of each section of the staff, members of the local authority and representatives of the public in the area of the centre, to deal with complaints, suggestions, and proposals for development.

Each local authority should be able to provide all (or practically all) the hospital accommodation necessary for its area. This should be on the basis of 1,000 beds (for nearly all types of case) for 100,000 population. The hospital senior staff would act as consultants and see patients either at (or near) the hospital, at a health centre, or in the patients' homes. In all areas the accommodation will continue, no doubt for a long time, to be spread over several hospitals, public and voluntary: specialist staff therefore would not necessarily be allocated to a particular hospital, but their services would be available to all of them. General practitioners would have the right to maintain contact

with their patients in hospital, and be given the opportunity to do a certain amount of work in hospital should they wish to specialise.

For the internal administration of the hospitals arrangements similar to those suggested for the health centres should be made. It would seem desirable that the salary and status attaching to higher clinical posts should be equal to those applicable to the medical superintendent, so that (as the Medical Planning Commission points out) the junior entrant to the hospital service could freely decide whether he wanted to end his career as a clinician or as an administrator. In the case of the centre and of the hospital it is important that there should be in each case a lay administrative officer, whose position *vis-à-vis* the medical administrator should be defined as clearly as possible.

In sparsely populated areas some modifications of the scheme outlined above would be necessary.

The changes in and great extensions of the present health service will afford the opportunity for integrating central responsibility. The existing distribution over a number of departments has little to commend it and much to criticise. Responsibility, also, should be responsibility for the public health only; not, as is the case with the Ministry of Health, for general control of local government as well as for other matters. The field of activity will be so great as to require the undivided attention of those in charge.

Should this central authority be a government department on the lines of the Ministry of Health, or should it be a corporate body carrying out policy as broadly laid down by Parliament but otherwise irresponsible? However satisfactorily the latter type of organisation may undertake locally-administered services for whose administration it alone is responsible, it would be unsuitable for dealing with services carried out by agents elected by and responsible to the people living within their areas of authority. It would be improper to place elected bodies such as these under the direction and control of officials not subject to Parliamentary supervision of their day-to-day administration. Local authorities, however imperfectly they may reflect the opinions and look after the interests of those who have the right to elect them, must as representative bodies have the power to appeal to the supreme representative body against officials in the event of dispute or grievance.

The Government's declared intention to preserve the local authority as the immediately responsible body seems therefore to postulate the retention also of the Minister-Department organisation as the central authority.

Both the Medical Planning Commission and the Society of Medical Officers of Health advocate the creation of an advisory body of some kind to be attached to the Ministry of Health. In view of the comprehensive nature of the new service this in principle would appear to be desirable. At present, because so much of the field of medicine is occupied by private or non-official practice, new forms of technique and treatment and fresh knowledge about disease make their way fitfully and in an unplanned manner into acceptance and use. But when the State is the provider of medical service in all its forms to practically the whole population there must be some systematic introduction of improved methods and the products of research. It would—or should—be inconceivable that people in one part of the country should have the advantage of a newly discovered drug that was unavailable for others. The medical service as a whole should be kept continuously as near abreast of medical science as possible. For this to be the case a Medical Advisory Committee should be created to recommend what developments were desirable from a medical point of view to those whose job it would be to estimate how far they were practicable in the light of political and financial considerations. Such an Advisory Committee would, necessarily, have to be comprised if not wholly at any rate to a large extent of medical men, drawn from all branches of medicine. Since, presumably,



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the great majority of doctors would be remunerated wholly out of public funds, the Committee should not in any way be concerned with such matters as conditions of service.

At present a great part of public health legislation is permissive in character. As a consequence there exist the great inequalities in the range and efficiency of services to which reference has been made. Something will therefore have to be done to even out somewhat, even though it be impossible to eliminate, these inequalities. There are considerable difficulties in the way of doing this, unless local authorities are to be reduced to little more than agents of a central department carrying out orders from above and being continuously supervised in their execution. Some approach to uniformity can probably best be achieved by legislation imposing a general duty upon local authorities to provide services of a nature to be prescribed from time to time (*e.g.*, fracture clinics) and by Exchequer grant based upon some formula to equate financial ability to carry out legal obligations. Part of the reason for the inequality of health services lies in the fact that the number of people who prefer and are able or may have to make their own arrangements for medical attention varies from place to place. Such people tend, naturally enough, to be indifferent or even hostile to the provision of services at public expense when they do not themselves use them. If they are numerous the services may be inadequate to meet the need which exists for them. The projected health service, however, is to be comprehensive, both in regard to what it does and for whom it does it. It is likely therefore that the only important deterrent to the provision of the best services in each area—which will mean a considerable degree of uniformity throughout the country—will be financial inability to meet the cost. This must be met by the payment of grant specifically in respect of the health services and on the basis of need. Since many existing health authorities will be merged to form new authorities, it would be difficult—and undesirable for another reason—to relate the amount of grant to the difference between present and future local expenditure on medical services. It would be much more satisfactory to work out for each authority the whole cost of the expanded service and to pay grant to each by the application each year, or perhaps biennially, of an appropriate formula (not the one now employed). A "standard" proportion which the grant should bear to total cost might be fixed (say 60 per cent.) and the proportion in particular cases made greater or less as need was greater or less than the mean.

In connection with finance, the retention of the voluntary hospital suggests certain difficulties. A considerable part of the income of the voluntary hospital comes from patients' fees, paid directly or by way of savings schemes, etc. In future no charge is to be made for any form of treatment. Not only will this kind of income cease: so also will income from donations and subscriptions. The only remaining income will be the interest on its invested funds (which constituted before the war about 14 per cent. of its income available for maintenance). The difference between its expenditure and this income will accordingly have to be met from public funds. Yet it will presumably feel itself entitled to retain control over its own management in proportion as it meets its costs with its own income. In what direction should this control be exercised? Voluntary hospitals which are and may continue to be teaching hospitals (there were 34 before the war) no doubt will wish to select their patients (to a certain degree at any rate) so as to provide students with a suitable range of material. But this right of selection should not be allowed in the case of other voluntary hospitals: their beds must form part of a pool, and they must accept patients as beds are available. They might have the right to appoint and control their own staff, though not to fix rates of pay, conditions of service and so forth; and to be responsible for internal administration, within the lines of policy laid down by the local authority. They should be entitled to nominate representatives on

to the local authority's Health Committee, and so be associated with the direction of the health service as a whole and not merely a part of it. Responsibility for structural alterations and additions to the hospital building and for new types of apparatus should be upon the local authority.

It is not easy to understand the part which private practice will play in relation to the new service. All persons will be entitled to all the benefits of the service without any payment except what may have been made by way of insurance contribution. What inducement can there be to pay for something which will already be freely available? Only one: that better attention or a wider range of treatment will be the result. One is entitled to hope that there will be no perpetuation of a system of medicine where the efficiency of treatment rises in accordance with the depth of the purse. There must be one standard only, and that the best, in the new service. Nevertheless, since there are wide disparities in income, there is, one supposes, no practical reason why people who are rich enough to pay for many quite unnecessary consultations with their doctor or for luxurious surroundings and costly food in private nursing homes should not continue to do so. But doctors who engage in private practice must not be concerned in any way with public practice. Doctors must elect to be in one or the other. There must be no more of that division of interest as between private and public or hospital patients which tends to put the former before the latter. At present many insured persons prefer to go to their "panel" doctor as fee-paying patients. Indifferent panel doctors are not indifferent because they get a flat-rate payment irrespective of what amount of service they give. It is because they are paid partly at a flat rate and partly *pro rata*, and in consequence they tend to give more to that part of their work which is remunerated on the latter basis. Where there is no division of economic interest there is an infinitely greater possibility of wholehearted attention to the job to be done. Where doctors, for whatever reason, may prefer to be free lances it will be for them to choose to do so; and for patients to choose to go to them. Treatment given to public patients must however be equally good in so far as the availability of drugs and specialised apparatus and other medical requirements is concerned.

In present circumstances the medical officer of health is responsible to his local council for the efficient running of their health services and for advising them on matters of policy and on the execution of policy. He is in consequence senior in status to all the full-time medical staff and has varying powers of direction and control over them. In regard to specialist part-time staff such as gynaecologists the relationship is different: he can be little more than the council's officer who is responsible for administrative arrangements and with whom they can consult about the need for further equipment, the development of their work, and so on. In the new service the medical officer should not only exercise some of the functions he does now but important additional ones. He should be the medium through which any proposals made by the representative body of doctors in regard to the working of the service (not in regard to remuneration or conditions of employment) should be passed on to the Health Committee. Similarly, he should make known to such a body decisions of the committee or discuss with them matters referred for this purpose by the committee.

What authority should he have over the doctors, none of whom could be in the same position of subordination as is the case with assistant medical officers? It should not extend to the right to intrude between doctor and patient or to criticise or make suggestions about the method of treatment being used. The medical officer should, however, be empowered to require the submission by doctors of reports upon their patients in certain circumstances and of such records and returns as might be necessary; and to take action by way of report to his committee when these were not properly kept.

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In no case should the medical officer of health be concerned in the non-medical administration of his department. Preparation of financial estimates, management of office staff, the handling of records and statistics are best carried out by a lay administrator, not only because the person responsible for them needs a particular type of training but because the medical officer's duties of a purely medical character will be infinitely greater than they are now. He must be able to meet the medical personnel as a professional colleague and not primarily as a departmental manager, as would be the case were he to remain responsible for administration in the narrower sense.

A body representative of the medical men in the area should be elected by them and known as the Medical Advisory Committee or a similar title. This body would have three important functions. As suggested above, it would pass on to the Health Committee and receive from that committee proposals affecting the health services in various ways. In addition, it would act as a court of appeal in connection with any decisions reached by the health centre committees about improper, inefficient or careless treatment. The fact that a patient could change his doctor in the event of dissatisfaction would not remove the need for more positive action to be taken when this was justified. Such a court of appeal should have attached to it a member of the Health Committee. Though possibly he would not be able fully to weigh the evidence, his presence would check any public suspicion that the profession might be screening its members.

It should be made obligatory for the local authority to appoint a Health Committee together with sub-committees to deal with the different departments of the service, e.g., maternity and child welfare, hospitals. Different aspects of a health authority's work are now quite commonly the concern of independent committees, although their business is clearly closely connected. It is true that the device of overlapping membership is often employed, but this is not nearly so satisfactory as control by the whole body of members able to survey all the field.

A good many obstacles stand between any plan for a comprehensive health service and its realisation. Hospital accommodation is below what is required and is unevenly distributed. There is a shortage of trained personnel (dentists, for example) which cannot be made up overnight. Nevertheless, even though for some time to come people may have to continue to wait for admission to hospital and health centres to be accommodated in converted houses, that is no reason for not making as big a step forward as present resources permit. M. Maisky said of a certain military proposal which has caused much contention that there was no need to wait until the last button had been sewn on the tunic of the last soldier. There should surely be much greater acquiescence in the view that in regard to medical services existing forces are such as to make possible a great advance toward an objective that admittedly will even then be still some distance away.

## The Beveridge Report and Public Assistance

By E. RIDLEY, O.B.E., LL.B.

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### TRANSFER OF OUTDOOR RELIEF

CHANGE 19 of the Beveridge Report which recommends the transfer to the Ministry of Social Security of the remaining functions of local authorities in respect of public assistance (other than treatment and services of an institu-

tional character) raises a number of questions of organisation and administration.

The functions to be so transferred are the following, viz. :—

- (1) Monetary assistance to destitute people in their own homes (out-relief).
- (2) Medical attention to destitute people in their own homes (medical relief).
- (3) Assistance in kind to persons who require help in circumstances of sudden and urgent necessity.

In addition, the relieving officer has certain statutory duties to perform in relation to persons alleged to be of unsound mind.

Sir William Beveridge in paragraph 454 of his Report considers that the transfer of responsibility for public assistance from local authorities to a national authority can be dealt with separately and later than the rest. This may not necessarily be the case.

The proposed Ministry of Social Security will require numerous local offices, as well as trained staff, before it can begin to function as the National Assistance Authority, and it is very doubtful whether the existing offices of the Assistance Board will suffice for the purpose. The transfer to the new Ministry of the various Public Assistance offices, would at once provide it with a network of offices covering the whole country, and at the same time, provide the nucleus of a staff specially trained in welfare work. In point of volume of work such a transfer will never be so easy to effect as in war-time, when the number of persons in receipt of public assistance is at its lowest. Were these the only factors to be considered, there would be every reason to urge the transfer at the earliest possible date. There are, however, other factors.

The Public Assistance Authorities not only grant assistance in money to necessitous families, but are responsible for the provision of medical care and attention to such families in their own homes. The ideal course would be for the comprehensive Health Service to take over the Public Assistance Domiciliary Medical Service concurrently with the transfer of domiciliary cash assistance to the new Ministry of Social Security. This would avoid the local authorities being left in the position of having to maintain a Public Assistance Domiciliary Service for only a small part of the work now performed by them. Some time will be required to organise the Health Service, and until it is ready, the transfer of cash assistance in the home would be premature.

The third present duty of the Public Assistance Authority as the residual authority to meet the immediate needs of any person in sudden and urgent necessity, can only be transferred when the new authority is fully organised to act.

Relieving officers, as such, have statutory duties in relation to persons alleged to be of unsound mind. They must in certain circumstances place any such person in a place of safety until a magistrate can examine him, and if necessary authorise his admission to a mental hospital. In less urgent cases they must arrange for the magistrate to examine the person without prior removal to a place of safety. Where the person is certified by the magistrate, the relieving officer is charged with the duty of seeing him conveyed safely to the mental hospital. Up to this point, the duty of the relieving officer could readily be transferred to the social security officer.

Under the present law, a mental patient whose means do not permit of his becoming a private patient, is a "rate-aided" patient, and as such is chargeable to the Public Assistance Authority. This authority has the task of ascertaining the patient's financial means, arranging for the proper care and administration of his estate, if he has one (usually by the appointment of a receiver), and of obtaining from the patient's estate, and from any liable relatives, contributions towards the patient's maintenance in hospital.

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It is rather difficult to see how the Public Assistance Authority can be relieved of its duties towards "rate-aided" mental patients, until it is known what form the comprehensive Health Service is likely to take, and what is equally important, whether the mental hospitals and mental health are to be included in such service. The Minister of Health has already intimated in question and answer in the Commons, that he is not including the Mental Hospitals Service in the discussions which he is now conducting with the medical profession and other bodies.

It would be regrettable if the Public Assistance Authorities should be called upon to maintain a service of relieving officers purely to deal with mental cases.

Another aspect of the transfer is also likely to present difficulties. The relieving officer is the official who normally directs the admission of necessitous persons to the Public Assistance hospitals and institutions, and, in fact, under the existing regulations of the Ministry of Health, his admission orders cannot be disobeyed by the heads of these places. This is the final safeguard of a destitute person in this country to have his needs adequately met. Where, however, the officers of the new authority are charged with the duty of meeting immediate needs in all circumstances, they would require complementary powers providing the means to discharge those duties by the issue of orders to make available one or other of the Public Assistance Services not transferred, for admissions to hospitals, institutions, and homes. Where the grant of domiciliary assistance and of institutional assistance is administered by the same authority as at present, the two are naturally co-ordinated. War-time conditions have made heavy demands upon existing Public Assistance hospital and institutional accommodation by reason of the Emergency Hospitals Service, the evacuation of large numbers of the population, and other causes. The division of functions involved in the separation of cash assistance from institutional assistance is calculated to lead to friction between the local authorities and the State authority until existing deficiencies in institutional accommodation are overtaken. This is not likely to happen for some years. Meanwhile, poor people who require institutional care will need to have their existing rights safeguarded and enforced. Should the social security officer (as the successor to the relieving officer) have the same power as the relieving officer to secure the admission of people to local authorities' hospitals and institutions? Undoubtedly he must have, unless we are to take away the destitute person's centuries-old right to adequate relief.

At whatever stage it is decided to transfer these functions, one course is decidedly to be deplored, viz., the piecemeal transfer of such functions, as is rather indicated by the Pensions and Determination of Needs Bill now before Parliament.

### INSTITUTIONAL SERVICES

The public assistance functions to be left to local authorities (*i.e.*, treatment and services of an institutional character) require some consideration in detail. These functions are (1) the treatment in hospitals and institutions of the destitute sick; (2) the maintenance in institutions of persons who for various reasons are unable (and in some instances, unwilling) to maintain themselves in ordinary life; (3) the maintenance of orphaned or deserted children, and the children of destitute parents; (4) the maintenance in mental hospitals of the mentally afflicted.

Assumption B of the Beveridge Report presupposes a National Health Service for the prevention and cure of disease and disability by medical treatment. Such a service must possess the necessary machinery of hospitals, clinics, sanatoria and the like. The Minister of Health, in his speech at Watford in March last, made it fairly clear that the Service is to be administered on a



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local authority basis, although he indicated that larger authorities than at present might be necessary for efficient planning and effective execution.

Local authorities are then likely to be called upon to administer both the hospital services for sick people and the institutional services for the aged and non-sick persons.

It is therefore worth taking stock of the classes of people already dealt with in the Public Assistance institutions of local authorities and of considering to what extent such classes will fit into the Comprehensive Health Service.

I am indebted to the County Public Assistance Officers' Society for the following analysis of the classes of persons at present maintained in these hospitals, institutions and homes, and of the classes which the Society considers to be suitable to be dealt with by the health services:—

### *A.—Classes of cases maintained in Institutions which should be dealt with by the Comprehensive Health and Rehabilitation Services.*

- (1) Acute medical and surgical cases.
- (2) Chronic Sick—Aged or otherwise.
- (3) Cripples for whom curative treatment or rehabilitation is suitable.
- (4) Blind persons for whom curative treatment or rehabilitation is suitable.
- (5) Deaf persons for whom curative treatment or rehabilitation is suitable.
- (6) Epileptics for whom curative treatment or rehabilitation is suitable, and also those who are beyond such treatment.
- (7) Maternity cases.
- (8) Mental patients under the Lunacy and Mental Treatment Acts.
- (9) Mental Defectives.
- (10) Mentally sub-normal, uncertified.
- (11) Senile Dementias.
- (12) Scabies and Verminous

### *B.—Classes of cases maintained in Institutions which appear to fall outside the scope of the Comprehensive Health and Rehabilitation Services.*

- (13) Aged and other persons merely requiring care and maintenance.
- (13) Helpless cripples merely requiring care and maintenance.
- (15) Unemployable blind persons who cannot benefit by rehabilitation.
- (16) Able-bodied adults (few in number) other than those in Classes (17) to (19) below.
- (17) Homeless deserted women, with or without children.
- (18) Families evicted from their homes.
- (19) Homeless pregnant women and nursing mothers.
- (20) Healthy children of all ages up to 16.
- (21) Vagrants.

For the purpose of this article the most interesting classification is Section B, comprising those persons who appear to be unlikely to be included in the health services, and may therefore fall within the institutional services of the local authorities.

The most important classes are the aged and children, and each class should have specialised institutions or homes.

### HOMES FOR OLD PEOPLE

On page 91 of the Beveridge Report, Table XI shows the probable number of old people (i.e., men over 65 years of age and women over 60 years of age) at ten-yearly periods up to 1971, when it is estimated that they will then form 20.8 per cent. of the entire population.

## ADMINISTRATIVE ASPECTS OF THE BEVERIDGE REPORT

Many old people who are still outside the range of the present Old Age Pensions Acts will become entitled to pensions under the Beveridge Scheme, and it is reasonable to hope that this will make a greater number of old people independent of institutional care. Many housing authorities in their housing schemes have already made some provision of a special type of dwelling suitable for aged people, and this is likely to be greatly extended in post-war schemes. The great majority of old people much prefer their own home and, with sufficient means, will probably be quite happy in a small dwelling or flat if relieved of heavy housework and if a form of unobtrusive welfare or supervision were provided.

There are, of course, many other factors in considering the probable demand for institutional accommodation for old people, but we may arrive at two conclusions, viz., (1) that healthy old people, assisted by their old age pensions, with suitable dwellings provided by the housing authorities, will be enabled to lead their own private lives without any need of institutional care, to a greater extent than at present; (2) that the old people for whom institutional accommodation (*i.e.*, old people's homes) will have to be provided by local authorities, will largely consist of those too infirm to manage alone in their own homes, with possibly a sprinkling of friendless old persons who prefer a communal life.

It may also follow, as local authorities develop a pleasant type of home, free from restrictions, comfortable and without any social stigma, that many healthy old people will be attracted thereto in their declining years.

How is this accommodation to be provided, and what should be the type or types of old people's homes?

Bearing in mind that the great majority of the residents are likely to be physically infirm, and certainly not active old people, the ideal to be aimed at, in my view, are premises wherein the whole of the ground floor should be given up to the old people for their bedrooms, common sitting and recreation rooms, dining rooms, and sick bays for those requiring occasional nursing. The first floor should contain the kitchens, stores, offices and staff quarters. Such an arrangement would enable every resident to take the fullest advantage of his or her ability to get about. Bedrooms might be planned for one, two, three and four persons. It would be essential that sick bay accommodation should at least be within the same curtilage as the homes themselves, otherwise there would be much unnecessary transfer of persons to and from hospital. Married couples could well reside together in such a home.

As a general principle old people's homes should be large enough to form an economic unit and not too large to be beyond the capacity of the head of the place to be personally acquainted with and interested in each resident. The general atmosphere should be that of a good private hotel.

Nevertheless, post-war conditions will not be favourable to the early erection of new buildings as ideal homes. Many competing demands will be made upon the available labour and materials for rehousing, hospitals, schools and other urgent needs, and existing buildings will have to be utilised to bridge over the early years. The future inability of many present owners of large houses to maintain them in the post-war world, the cessation of existing war-time use of large houses by evacuated firms, and the return of evacuees will set free many such premises. Wherever the sanitary deficiencies can be overcome, the conversion of mansions to old people's homes, though far from ideal, is preferable to any general policy of adapting old Poor Law institutions for the purpose. A few county councils have already converted a number of large houses into fairly comfortable homes.

In whatever ways the accommodation is provided in the early years, pending

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the erection of properly planned homes, the provision made should be regarded as improvised, and not necessarily as a model to be followed in new buildings.

The closest co-operation between the hospitals of the Health Service and the old people's homes will be essential, to reduce to a minimum the transfer of old people from one to the other. If, as may possibly happen, the two services do not fall under the same local authority, it is to be hoped that the areas of the separate authorities (or groups of authorities) will be as closely related as possible.

### HOMES FOR CHILDREN

The next major institutional accommodation required of local authorities will be that for healthy children of all ages. These would include orphans, deserted or neglected children, children of parents unfit to have control of them, place of safety cases under the Children and Young Persons Act, and children of mothers who are incapacitated either temporarily or permanently by physical or mental illness. The effect of children's allowances should reduce the number of children requiring institutional care, though there may be some increase in the number of children who require care for short periods when the mother or guardian is in hospital or otherwise unable to look after them.

Experience has shown that the boarding-out system is the best method of dealing with children, provided that it is limited to orphan or deserted children and the "profit" motive is eliminated. The system is not, however, suitable for "short-period stay" children or for those whose parents are likely to resume the care of them at some future date, or for children who are physically or mentally below par.

Present Public Assistance Homes are usually either "scattered homes," *i.e.*, ordinary dwelling houses in various parts of the area, or "grouped homes," *i.e.*, a number of homes on the one site. Each system has its special advantages and drawbacks.

There is not any real need to have children's homes in any particular locality, like old people's homes, but no home should be larger than can be managed by one foster mother.

Very young children should be accommodated in crèches or residential nurseries with a properly trained nursing staff.

### MISCELLANEOUS CLASSES

Of the miscellaneous classes enumerated in Section B, cripples might with advantage remain within the Health Service, even if they cannot further benefit by treatment or rehabilitation. Unemployable blind persons who require institutional care are probably best accommodated in special homes, where special facilities and attendance can be given to them, *e.g.*, braille books and periodicals, trained readers and teachers, aids to self-movement and the like.

The three classes of able-bodied adults, deserted married women and evicted families, though small in number, represent difficult social problems which are not likely to disappear. The Beveridge Report frankly recognises that there will be persons who will fail to comply with the insurance conditions, and in consequence will be disentitled to any domiciliary benefits, and who in the last resort must be subject to penal treatment. Sir William Beveridge does not suggest any particular form of penalty, and there will be degrees of culpability. The Ministry of Social Security should devise their own measures for dealing with these persons, who ought to be outside the range of local authorities' responsibilities.

The great majority of able-bodied men in Public Assistance institutions are mentally or physically subnormal, and without special training are unable to stand up to the strain of competition for work. Much can be done for these

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men by special training, and perhaps the best way to deal with them is to make the Ministry of Labour responsible for their maintenance and training in occupations suited to their limited intelligence. It is a sheer waste to herd them into the institutions of the local authorities.

The majority of deserted married women and their families can have their immediate needs met by national assistance, but there will at times be cases where such women would temporarily be homeless and need to be dealt with by someone, even if only for a short period.

Whatever measures are taken to accommodate these small classes of homeless people, they should be kept distinct from the homes for old people and the homes for children. To admit them even in the smallest numbers to such homes is to attach to the latter the stigma which follows the mixed institution.

The problem of vagrancy is one which needs to be dealt with on its own, preferably on a national basis, and should on no account be associated with the health and institution services of the local authorities.

One remaining class needs some comment. The Beveridge Report recommends the grant of maternity benefit to the unmarried mother in the interest of the child. It also contemplates that the Social Security Office will help her in affiliation proceedings. Nevertheless, there will still occur cases of homeless unmarried mothers who will require institutional care both before and after confinement. The numbers are likely to be small, but in so far as they require institutional care they should be dealt with in mother and baby homes under the supervision of the authorities dealing with the comprehensive health service.

### REHABILITATION OF FAMILIES

This is a social need which is not touched upon in the Report. In so far as families which become disunited come within the range of the present Public Assistance Authorities, every effort is made to trace parents who desert their families or who fail to remove their children from the homes, and to keep in touch with parents who are for the time being unable to maintain their children at home. In many cases where the whole family becomes chargeable every encouragement is given to enable the parents to re-establish a home. The liability under the Poor Law Acts of parents to maintain their children, and of sons and daughters to maintain aged and infirm parents, is an added incentive to enforce family responsibility. Now that domiciliary assistance, either by way of insurance benefits or by national assistance, is to be divorced from institutional care and administered by a separate authority, it is doubly necessary to ensure that some machinery should be provided to carry out the work of the present Public Assistance Authorities in re-uniting and rehabilitating sundered families, and ensuring that parents do not shirk their parental responsibilities.

During the past fifteen years Parliament has wobbled a good deal on the question of the range of liable relatives as originally enunciated in the Poor Law Act of 1601. The Local Government Act, 1929, applied the 1601 range of liable relatives to the maintenance of patients in Public Health Hospitals. In 1934, it excused them in the grant of unemployment assistance by the Assistance Board. In 1938 in the Blind Persons Act it reiterated the 1601 range in relation to blind persons. Now in the Pensions and Determination of Needs Bill before Parliament the range of liable relatives in the grant of outdoor relief, and assistance to the blind, is limited to husband and wife in respect of any liable relative forming part of the same household as the recipient.

In view of the principles underlying the Beveridge Scheme as a whole, it is reasonable to assume that Parliament will eventually limit family responsibility to the parent for a dependent child, and to the husband and wife for a spouse.

For the work of family rehabilitation the Social Security Ministry, if it undertook the work, would have the advantage of close contacts with the Ministry of Labour for training and employment-finding facilities, and to a less degree with the Health and Rehabilitation Services. It would also have its own detailed insurance and national assistance records. It would require up-to-date information of the admissions and discharges of persons to and from the various institutions of the local authorities, and to be equally well informed of the progress of persons undergoing training in the training centres of the Ministry of Labour and the opportunities of work.

On lines like these it might be possible for the Social Security Office to carry out the work of reuniting and re-establishing sundered families.

For such work the local authorities, if they undertook it, would have the advantage of local knowledge, of close contacts with the housing authorities, as well as being completely aware of the various persons in their institutions whether for children or adults. As they would only be concerned in restoring to their families the individuals in their institutions the case recording work would be much less. The closest co-operation would have to be maintained with the Social Security Office and the Ministry of Labour, and also with other departments of the local authority such as the Education and Health, Maternity and Child Welfare sections.

Possibly the local authority with its long experience with the work might prove to be the best agency, but undoubtedly it is a gap which would have to be filled under the new scheme by some authority.

## Administration of the Proposals in the Beveridge Report

By SIR HENRY BUNBURY

*(An extract from an Address given at a Regional Meeting of the American Public Welfare Association, 7th March, 1943, and published in the April issue of "Public Welfare.")*

**Y**OU will at a conference such as this expect me to say something of the administrative machinery for carrying out the Plan.

In the first place, what the report proposes is, in broad outline, the unified central administration of the cash benefits, through a new Ministry of Social Security, under a Cabinet Minister. Medical services will remain under the general supervision of the Ministry of Health, which is also the Ministry of Local Government. There will, however, be a joint committee of all Ministries concerned with any aspect of social security for the purpose of co-ordinating policy, promoting the prevention of disease, and reducing the burdens on the social insurance fund. The Ministries chiefly concerned, in addition to the proposed new Ministry, are the Ministries of Health, Labour, and Education.

So far, the effects of the Plan are in the direction of centralisation in Whitehall. The report proposes, however, the establishment of a network of regional



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and local security offices and it emphasises two points as of outstanding importance:—

- (1) A policy of decentralised administration, and close contact with local agencies of all kinds which deal with the varied needs of insured persons; and
- (2) Special measures for the selection and training of staff with a view to a full understanding of the human problems with which they will be concerned.

The movement towards centralisation—the replacement of the Town hall by Whitehall—is not so much a new departure as an enhancement of a tendency already existing. For a good many years now the growing awareness by the central organs of government of their responsibility for the welfare of all citizens, fortified by constant pressure in Parliament to do something about it, has made the nineteenth century doctrine of local responsibility for local distress untenable and obsolete. The whole tendency has been towards national responsibility, operating through local agencies, with national direction and control. We cannot have it both ways. If the nation as a whole is responsible, the nation must see to it and where necessary do it. The war, with its new emphasis on sharing alike the civic obligations, the perils and the available resources, has greatly fortified this trend towards unified national responsibility. What we can do, and what the Report proposes, is to develop local agencies and use them to the full at the point of action. These are the lines on which the proposed administration is founded. An increase of what is loosely and not very accurately called “bureaucracy” is inevitable. To a material extent the insurance agent and the relieving officer will be replaced by, or become, government officials. They will be responsible not to a municipal council or to a commercial corporation but to an authority in London or Edinburgh or Cardiff. But we can at least secure that they are more than mere routine, regulation-ridden, agents of a Whitehall department, that they are trained for and responsive to the human elements in their job; that they belong in spirit to the locality and the people whom they serve. In this matter the experience of the Assistance Boards, which in 1934 took over on behalf of the central government the greater part of the public assistance function of local authorities (the old “poor law”), is encouraging from the administrative point of view. Whatever differences of opinion there may have been about policy, it is generally recognised that administratively the local organisation of the Assistance Board has worked well. In blitzed cities, where it was the principal agency for dealing with immediate distress, it has risen magnificently to the occasion.

The proposal to unify in a single central department the administration of cash benefits has one other purpose which calls for mention. Multiplying administrative agencies not only reflects complications: it creates them. A set-up which makes a distinction, legally and administratively, between unemployment due to ill-health and unemployment due to inability to find a job, not only brings the worker under different jurisdictions according to the precise circumstances of his case, but it also creates a complex of procedures and formalities between those jurisdictions themselves. That is one of the ways in which red tape is manufactured. Yet to John Smith, who needs food for his family and himself, the question whether if there were a job to get, he is well enough to get it, or whether the job just is not there at all does not seem to make much practical difference.

The next administrative issue which arises is the old conflict between political responsibility and executive efficiency. This conflict usually presents itself in the form of a demand that administration shall be “taken out of

politics." This is an old conflict in the history of the British Social Services—over one hundred years old.

Beveridge's solution is an interesting one. He places the administration of social security wholly within the political system by having at its head a Minister of Social Security responsible to Parliament. But in order to supply the element of continuity of policy and purpose, of detachment from party politics, and of objective regard for facts—qualities of which political bodies are liable to be a little short—he recommends a standing Statutory Commission, non-political in composition, with the functions of reporting on the financial condition of the Social Insurance Fund, on all regulations and orders before they are made, on the adequacy of the benefits, and on any other matters referred to them. Its reports will, of course, be published; and if the politicians should sin, they will at any rate be sinning, and be known to be sinning, against the light. It may be that we have hit on the solution, or a partial solution, of that most difficult problem of democracy, how to reconcile the need on the one hand for effective day-by-day responsibility to Parliament as representing the people and on the other for sound and consistent policies steadily pursued.

And lastly, the **Plan** makes use of most of the agencies, largely local and voluntary in character, through which our social insurance and its allied services have hitherto been to a large extent operated, provided that they are not operated for profit. Their functions may be changed but their experience and skill will be wanted. Indeed it is not too much to say that, in my opinion, the scheme will succeed in proportion as it is operated "at the grass roots." Pure centralisation is death.

## Reform of the Foreign Service

By F. T. A. ASHTON-GWATKIN, C.B., C.M.G.

(Assistant Under-Secretary of State and Chief Clerk, Foreign Office)

BY Order-in-Council dated 20th May, 1943, the Diplomatic and Foreign Office Service, the Consular Service and the Commercial Diplomatic Service ceased to exist as independent services, and a single Foreign Service was created in their stead. By the terms of the Order-in-Council, all members of these four services at once became members of the Foreign Service. The Order-in-Council further gave power to the Secretary of State by published regulation to add other individuals and classes of officials to the Foreign Service. This power will in due course be used to bring into the Foreign Service certain categories of officials now employed in London, and also (this is most important) the great majority of subordinate staff—King's Messengers, Accountants, Archivists, Cypher Officers, Clerks, Shorthand-typists, Chancery servants, Office-keepers, Press-keepers, Messengers, etc.—who at present are either established civil servants employed under Home Civil Service Regulations, or unestablished, many of these latter being locally recruited abroad, and having no security of employment and no pension rights.

At a very rough estimate, the numbers of staff involved will be:—Senior branch, 600; Junior branches, 1,500. It is a small service, and from this point of view the problem of organisation should not be difficult.

## REFORM OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE

The next step in the Reform programme has been the introduction of the Foreign Service Bill, which is in fact an interim Superannuation Bill to give power to the Secretary of State to retire before the age of 60 members of the Senior Branch of the Foreign Service who have been found unsuited for the highest posts but who otherwise have had blameless and useful careers. At present he has no such power, and such persons must be carried until they reach the canonical age or be placed *en disponibilité*, i.e., on the unemployed list, earning neither pay nor pension. By the new Bill, the Secretary of State will have power to retire such persons with a small improvement of pension terms in the case of those whose pensions under existing legislation would be clearly inadequate.

The above paragraphs indicate the three pillars of Mr. Eden's Reforms:—

- (1) Amalgamation of the old Services: thus widening the choice of the best men, and the general experience and education of the new Service; and removing the invidious distinction between Diplomat and Consul, which was doing damage to both.
- (2) Organisation of the Subordinate Branches on whom so much depends, and to whom so little consideration has been given in the past.
- (3) Removal, in the kindest and most honourable way possible, of those members of the Service who have outlived their usefulness and are causing positive harm in blocking promotion.

Among Mr. Eden's further proposals as enunciated in the White Paper "Proposals for the Reform of the Foreign Service" (Cmd. 6420) are:—

- (1) A new Recruitment and Training scheme providing for language instruction at Government expense;
- (2) An effort to meet the financial hardship involved in transfer from a foreign post to a post in London;
- (3) Indication of the organisation of a Personnel Department and a general system of inspection; hitherto there have been inspections of consular posts only.

Of these further proposals, however, the two former will not come into effect until after the war, and the last can only come into being by gradual steps.

A good deal of nonsense has been talked and written about democratisation of diplomacy and abolition of the old school tie. The real object of Mr. Eden's reforms is to create order out of confusion, and to provide the country with a businesslike machine.

The four services and their junior branches were like one of those old country mansions that had grown together over a long period of time, full of corners and corridors and waste spaces and staircases and blank walls and blocked windows and cellars and attics, the complete plan of which was known only to a few old retainers. It was rather picturesque and full of tradition and family ghosts, but it was inconvenient and insanitary.

The new building will, it is hoped, carry on much of the tradition of the old, but with more sunlight and air, and a far more practical arrangement and organisation. To begin with, the links with London will be closer and more personal. In the eighteenth century the Head of a Mission was in truth "plenipotentiary and extraordinary." He could do what he liked and as he liked it; and men like Harris in the Netherlands and Stratford Canning in Constantinople have made history; but in the second half of the nineteenth century he came under control of the telegram. He became a figure worked on wires. But still, in the remoter countries—Middle East, Far East, South America—he was very far from London and London's instructions were often of the "carry on" type. But now the aeroplane is making another change.

The diplomat abroad will usually be within one day's journey from Whitehall, and never more than three or four. Whitehall will watch his work and his staff management pretty closely, will give him more assistance (it is hoped) both spiritual and material; but also more control. Fewer ships will be spoiled for lack of the hap'orth of tar; but tar is public money after all, and must be properly accounted for. The Head of the Mission is still the representative of the Government, but he is also the manager of the firm—British Interests Incorporated. He will be expected to have that personal effect on every member of his team (alike within his Mission and in his outlying consulates) by which a good manager proves his leadership. He has to superintend all branches of the work, politics and trade, publicity and culture; the work of his diplomatic and commercial secretaries, his naval, military and air attachés, his public relations officers, his consuls whether in the capital or the provinces, the work of the British Council in providing educational facilities representative of British life, the organisation and direction of British communities to help or at least not to hinder national policy.

The firm, that is the Government, will have to carry expenditure of a wider range and different character than heretofore, expenditure on large-scale entertaining and frequent travelling, often by air. We can no longer rely on the Service being subsidised from the private incomes of its members. There must be reasonable and equitable salaries and pensions which take into account the obligations to serve abroad, sometimes in unhealthy posts; and all expenditure that can be shown to have been incurred in national service should be met direct from the Exchequer, perhaps from a fund carefully controlled from London or under the Head of the Mission concerned. Hitherto, although since the end of the last war, the private income qualification (£400 a year) for the Diplomatic Service has been abolished, a high proportion of members of the Service have had private means, and they have not hesitated to subsidise His Majesty's Government, sometimes lavishly, out of their own resources. There may still be rich men in the Service of the future, but there will surely be very few; and the new Service must assume that there will be none. This will mean on the one hand more generous terms from the Exchequer, but on the other a close control and inspection of the funds spent on our Missions abroad.

The Service, in all its branches, should be an attractive one to candidates after the war. The absolute obligation to serve abroad (which will be an innovation in the junior ranks) may be a deterrent to the less adventurous, but should be an attraction to the type which the Service requires. This type is best described by that line at the beginning of the *Odyssey* which says of Odysseus that "many were the men whose cities he saw and whose mind he learned":—

πολλῶν δ' ἀνθρώπων ἔβην ἄστεα κῶ νόον ἔγνων.

The Service can offer to its members in all its branches a great opportunity for national service, a wide knowledge and experience of the world as seen from a position of unique advantage, and a personal share in the great events of the time.

# The Civil Servant: His Place and Training

By SIR GWILYM GIBBON

THE coming decades will be lively, with big political, economic and social forces in action. It is more than likely that they will be years of much travail; they will certainly be years of deep interest and great opportunities. The functions of the State will be widely extended. It is good, therefore, that the place of the civil servant, central and local, should be examined anew, good for the community even more than for the services. The following brief comments have been principally prompted by the papers presented to the conference of the Institute in April last.

## I

The establishment of the civil service was beyond question one of the biggest governmental inventions of the last century. It provided a public service not surpassed in any country and approached in few. Shortcomings there are in plenty: I agree with the gist of Professor Laski's criticisms, and would go further in some directions. But that does not affect the general judgment.

One basic principle has been abstention from partisan politics, at least in the higher administrative ranks. Not just an ostensible but a genuine abstention. Professor Laski would put the clock back—because he wants the clock to run very much faster for his own particular evangel! If I understand him aright he wants civil servants not only to be aware of, but to be in sympathy with and to speed forward, the “unfolding pattern” of the times. Presumably the unfolding pattern as interpreted by him and others of like mind, not by—shall we say, as an extreme instance—Sir Ernest Benn.

There is some dangerous plausibility in the view. How can an administration be well and effectively directed unless the administrators be in active sympathy with its political purposes? But the logical ending of that road is the spoils system.

I heartily agree that any person who aspires to high administrative office should possess a sound groundwork of knowledge about the political, social and economic development and organisation of the country and about the forces operating within these spheres. One probable reason why this knowledge has not been given its due place is that the subjects as generally purveyed are apt to contain too many generalities and personal opinions, and are therefore considered by many not to provide good material for sound intellectual discipline—although one would have thought that, even with their failings, they contain better material than some of the more hackneyed subjects, which maintain their place largely from tradition and vested interests. However that may be, it is certain that this groundwork will become increasingly desirable with the deeper incursions of the State into the economic and social life of the people.

These deeper incursions, however, will make it all the more important to avoid a partisan spirit within the Service and to cultivate a professional (scientific, if that be preferred) temper of mind. (I say professional “temper” because I wish to avoid here the issue whether the Civil Service is a profession: Professor Laski would seemingly go a long way towards making it a mission!) The last



fifty years have seen big changes, the next fifty will see bigger. The world, as well as the army, marches in quicker step! Political parties will continue, with differences likely to become more acute than less, despite some Fascist tendencies. Indeed, the very suggestion that civil servants should become partisan has at least a touch of these tendencies. Our constitution is not made for all time, it is in fact very malleable, but the time has certainly not yet arrived for setting aside the basic principle that important political issues are matters for electors and those who represent them, and not for civil servants. The civil service must obviously avoid slipping into a position where it cannot serve with equal fidelity whichever party is legitimately in power. If, as contended in some quarters, it has been in that position, then it must get out of it.

I should like to make it abundantly clear that these views are not in any way influenced by any worship of things as they are. In fact, I am less tied to them in principle than Professor Laski. He is a dogmatist, I am a pragmatist, empiricist if any should like that better. That is why I playfully referred to him as an antediluvian. He is sure of what should be and what will be: I am by no means sure even of the quarter to which this country will have journeyed in a hundred, or even fifty, years' time, in the intriguing and often very cussed march of mankind through the ages. The history of the last two decades, to go no further back, is forceful in its lessons of the dangers, the disasters, of pursuing politics with fixed ideas. Solid progress in the years ahead will depend largely on the application of the empirical methods of science to political affairs, and, with even clearer case, to administration. There will be abundant place for enthusiasms, but tempered enthusiasms, free from the obsession that a proposal must be good because it is thought good and treating new measures as experiments to be tested by their results. Fundamentalism has no place in politics; life is an adventure. But I must not pursue this theme, though it has a close bearing on our subject.

Nor do the comments preceding this discussion imply that the civil servant must be a political eunuch. On the contrary, he is likely to be a poor fish if he has not reached some fairly definite views before he has been long in the service, even though they may be of Laodicean bent. But it does mean that the civil service is not quite the place for a political gospeller. I was at times accused of being a hot gospeller even when in the service, but I was always careful not to trespass beyond administrative reforms. The political parties not unselfishly get their controversial teeth even into issues of this kind, and the civil servant does well to avoid any so maltreated as he would a bull in the tantrums. But it is highly desirable that public opinion allow civil servants liberal scope in discussing purely administrative changes, for this should be very much within their province.

I may be told that all this avoids the issue and that what really matters is not what the civil servant does in public but what he does behind the departmental screen, in particular the advice he tenders. Laski's particular instances are not altogether happy. His version of the relations between Grey and Crowe was criticised by one with more inside knowledge than available to him or to me. (Incidentally, too, his ranking of Morant and Simon with Rousseau and Bentham—"each . . . marked an epoch in his field comparable in its importance with that of" the latter "in the area of social philosophy"—seems an exercise in exuberant fantasy. It has been the fashion in some quarters to exaggerate the work and influence of Morant, even allowing for his educational *tour de force* at the beginning of the century. Simon rendered outstanding services in public health, but the great pioneer in this field was, of course, Chadwick.)

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This matter of advice to Ministers is so important for our subject that it is well to pursue it further, though not at length. The civil servant should become an expert in many matters within his province—in knowledge, in needs, in measures likely to achieve stated purposes, in results likely to be produced by proposed measures, and in probable reaction of groups to proposals. It is his duty, when required, and sometimes even on other occasions, to put his views candidly before his superiors. The Minister who did not welcome such advice would be foolish, even if it should conflict with his own views.

The little Minister and the mediocre may be too much influenced by the advice or, still worse, may reject it without much examination because not to his taste. The big Minister will use the advice, with much questioning if in doubt, just as one item in coming to a decision. The answer of democracy to this problem, the only sound answer, should be not to exalt the civil servant beyond his place or to relegate him to the foot-stool, as some would enjoy, but to find strong Ministers of stature equal to their task, a job at which, by and large, democracy has badly failed in recent years.

A related subject is that of research, genuine and thorough research, not the semblance of it which is often accepted as good currency, much less inquiries by commissions and committees, with reports usually based more on opinions than on definite facts. There is no sphere where research is more needed than in that of government, there are few of similar importance where it is so neglected. There are systematic governmental arrangements for stimulating and aiding research in matters medical and industrial; none of the same order in matters governmental. It is amazing, for instance, that, although there have been some interesting reports, there has not been any thorough and comprehensive research into the results of the big social measures introduced during the present century, and that despite some disquieting symptoms.

The subject of research is mentioned here because it has an important bearing on the work and training of the civil service. It is one essential technique towards that discipline of thought and exactness of knowledge which should be among the aims of the service. And that even though much of the research, possibly most, would be done by competent persons outside the service.

## II

I have said that I agree with the substance of most of Professor Laski's criticisms of the service as it is at present. There have been big improvements in the last two decades, but there is abundant room for more. I have elsewhere stressed in particular the need for personnel departments on the best modern lines, even more concerned for efficiency than for numbers and grades and pay. This throughout the service, and especially at the Treasury. Reforms are now under way; they will not be sufficient if they are not bold.

Delegation should be carried very much further. The waste because of fear of extensive delegation is enormous.

Much more should be methodically done for finding out men of exceptional ability in the lower ranks, and that while they are still young. There is no better test than trying them out on work well above that of their station. I am fully aware of the reasons for delimiting rather tightly the boundaries of work for the various classes, but I suggest to the Staff Associations that they should not pounce with too quick an eye if a junior is being given a chance to prove his mettle on work beyond his rank. It is contradictory to urge the exceptional promotion of men of exceptional ability and to object to measures

for finding out whether a man possesses the ability. And, to be adequate, the test must be thorough and be applied for a sufficient time.

It is easy to find fault with selection by examinations. I have yet to find a better, as a general practice, after looking into other tests which have proved very good for jobs with much routine. The improvement of examinations, including the *viva*, is another matter. The probationary period should be still more thoroughly and strictly applied. We can probably assume that provision will be made at no long distant date for retiring, and enabling the voluntary retirement of, men who have reached the end of their tether in the Service before the normal age of retirement.

Proposals for appointments without impartial test need to be closely scrutinised. They might easily lead to appointments comparable with those of the old days of patronage, especially in the political climate that may develop in the coming decades. There is a strong case for arranging that appointments by selection and not by test shall be made, or at least be confirmed, by a competent, impartial body wholly independent of the Government which may happen to be in power at the time. This is the more important because many more such appointments will be made with the coming expansion of State services, especially the setting up of more bodies of the type of public service corporations.

I agree that there is much to be said for bringing into the civil service for posts of importance men of proved exceptional ability in the local government service or other spheres. But the general efficiency of the service would suffer if this were done without good reason and, if it had to be done frequently, would indicate that something was radically wrong with the service. From the armchair there is a good deal to be said for a much freer exchange of officers between the central and local government services, in practice not so much. Nor is it likely to take place to a large extent. For an exceptionally able man the local government service on the whole offers more opportunities, if fewer honours, than the central. Always provided that the important appointments are open to the best candidates, without unfair preference for the local man, and there have been some unfortunate signs of regression in recent years, regression which needs to be combated by all who have the good of the local government at heart.

There can be little question that central officials should have more personal experience of the actual operations of the bodies with which they deal whether local authorities or business concerns. There is now more personal touch than realised by many critics who look upon a Government office almost as a cloistered retreat. In my own case, for instance, even relatively junior officers were constantly seeing officers and representatives of local authorities, and at times of other bodies. But I agree that this needs to be supplemented by seeing how things are really done, not only at meetings of councils or other directing bodies and committees, but by officers in the course of their daily task. A sewage disposal works, for instance, wears a different air on the spot from that on paper!

The foregoing are not more than just notes on questions on which there is a lot more to be said. And there are also many more questions.

### III

Lastly, the staff college. I remain open-minded but unconvinced, and sure that there are other things which should be done first. Advocates seem to be by no means clear what they want. At one meeting Major Urwick made

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an eloquent and pointed criticism of the over-staffing of departments in the lower ranks, because the work was not properly sub-divided (there is more to it than just that). But a staff college is not required for remedying this too common ill. More is not needed than a live and adequately equipped personnel department to ensure that appropriate measures are taken, measures not really recondite. Nor, if the praise bestowed on the "schools" set up by some departments for new "temporaries" be accepted at its face value—it is well to be wary in these days when "public relations officers" flourish—does that support any case for a staff college.

One of the objects put in the forefront in favour of a staff college is the provision of systematic means for the exchange of experiences and views between members of the civil and local services and persons in industrial and other activities. Unquestionably a commendable purpose, long overdue: the qualities required in the Civil Service even yesterday, and much more to-morrow, will not be matured in a cloistered atmosphere. But here again a staff college is not required; indeed, systematic means for periodical conferences promise more advantages, especially if organised for general conferences round a table and not for mass meetings. The technique of so-called conferences is more backward than anything in the civil service. And conferences need to be supplemented by inspection on the spot, as already indicated.

For Prof. Laski there is nothing like leather, a weakness common to all of us, and grace is to be found not in any staff college but in the university, no doubt with the student to be inoculated with the "unfolding pattern" as seen by the particular lecturer! Lest I be misunderstood, let me make it clear that I agree that it is more important to elicit the principles behind facts than just to state the facts, though to do so is waste of effort unless the facts have first been impartially ascertained in their right setting, a task by no means easy. The mischief is that, in the stage of development at present reached by the political, economic and social "sciences," so much often depends on personal opinions.

If a staff college were officially proposed, I suggest that the staff associations would be well advised not to oppose it from fears that it might injure the prospects of men in the lower ranks. It would be wise to concentrate on provision which would add to their opportunities.

It seems to me that all these schemes of post-entry training suffer too much from the old scholastic spirit. I have dared to express the opinion that formal education, from the elementary to the advanced, is one of the tragic failures of our times, considering the effort and money spent on it, that life is the true educator, and that the best service that formal education can render is to equip men for learning the lessons of their own experiences. Just as one illustration, I hold that consultations on significant cases, for their actual decision, can provide better education than reams of lectures, consultations attended by junior as well as senior officers, and where the junior, if diffident, is egged on to express his own views first, not in the closet but in the open, with his seniors present. That is the way to help men grow.

I should be liberal in allowing special leave for courses of instruction or informative visits and, still more, for research. But not too easily liberal; coddling does not make for strength. Perhaps I am prejudiced because I was brought up in the hard way, in good old Puritan fashion. There is a lot more to be said for the spirit of old Samuel Smiles than the present generation will readily allow, despite his simple-minded adoration of success. War has once

more demonstrated that for a large proportion of men the easy way is not the most satisfying.

I should add, what I have said elsewhere, that in my experience one general need of persons of high promise in the clerical ranks has been just what the schools are supposed to provide—a broad knowledge of political, economic and social conditions and developments. But they are not singular in this; the lack is by no means absent from many who have passed through the universities. Anyway, a person who really wants to learn can easily fill the want by suitable reading, but this should be supplemented by discussion.

Summing up, while far from any wish to be dogmatic about the staff college or any of the other matters which have been mentioned, it seems to me that the best practical hopes of progress lie along the lines which have been suggested, to which I would add the exceptional promotion at an early age of men of proved exceptional ability, wherever they are found, and there are not many at best.

One more matter. I have little liking for the usual commission or committee. But I think that there is a case for a thorough investigation by, say, the three most competent men who can be obtained to ascertain how the Civil Service can be improved for the coming tasks. These tasks will be big. The working classes are in the saddle. They will settle the main direction of policy whichever the party in power. Some idea of the extent of coming changes may be gathered from those which took place after the reformers came into power in the last century, but the measure and the pace will be much greater. The country will need more than ever a civil service strong in public trust, alive to the spirit of the times but free from partisan temper, and endowed with an exemplary standard of professional efficiency, as well as of conduct. And I suggest that the setting up by the Government of systematic measures for research would powerfully minister to this end, as well as being needed as an essential instrument of modern government.

Finally, not in mitigation of criticism but in general appreciation, I should like to pay my tribute to Prof. Laski's paper, particularly for its stimulating and provocative quality.

## Post-Entry Training for Administration

NOTE OF CONFERENCE DISCUSSION ON 10TH and 11TH APRIL, 1943

*(The three papers were included in the April issue of*

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Mr. C. KENT WRIGHT (Town Clerk, Stoke Newington), who presided, opened the proceedings by pointing out that there were three main questions before the Conference: (1) whether an administrative staff college was desirable; (2) if so, whether it should be restricted to the Civil Service or should include local government officers and representatives of industry; and (3) how candidates for admission should be selected.

Mr. BYNG (Vice-Chairman, Standard Telephones and Telegraphs, Ltd.) said that 90 per cent. of the problems facing the public services and private employment alike were



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very similar and each had something they could learn from the other. He agreed with Professor Laski that the proportion in which pure administration entered into the functions of those in control was growing greater. The administrative class in the Civil Service suffered from lack of contact with people; they had not had to experience the rough and tumble of life. The Post Office was the pioneer among departments in recognising this and providing a remedy. Administration was a science which could and should be taught, not as an academic subject but in constant relation to practice. The teaching of administration so far had done no more than scratch the surface; the creation of a staff college would carry it a good step further. He saw no insuperable difficulty about selecting entrants to the college by tests such as those which could be formulated by the Institute of Industrial Psychology.

Dr. BOWIE (Principal, Dundee School of Economics) said that it was still necessary to emphasise the importance of the study of administration. There were plenty of books and journals on the subject ready for use. He thought that the five-months' course proposed was only a half-way house to something more ambitious. Administration being an essay in applied ethics, applied economics, and applied psychology, it was a subject so wide as to provide material for three or four years of study. The proposed college course could do little more than acquaint students with the ramifications of the subject.

Mr. HOWARD ROBERTS (Solicitor to the London County Council) gave an emphatically affirmative reply to the question whether a staff college was desirable. He supported with equal emphasis the view that it should embrace public servants and private employees. He did not want it run under a university umbrella because he believed the accent should be on its practical nature. He spoke of the great value of the personal contacts which a college training would provide. The longer course proposed by Dr. Bowie seemed somewhat idealistic; four or five months was as much as most employers could spare their staff; they must walk before they tried to run. He did not share Mr. L. C. White's fear that a candidate passed over in selection for attendance at the college would be so discouraged as to weaken service morale. There would be a thorough comb-out before the choice was made; this should satisfy the staff that the best man was being chosen and leave no ground for disgruntlement.

Mr. WATSON-SMYTH (Ministry of Labour) spoke as one who had many years of industrial experience and was now seconded to a Ministry. He found the atmosphere of the Civil Service quasi-political, in that every civil servant regarded it as his major duty to protect his Minister; this was very proper, since the Service is employed to serve the Government, but it sometimes led to a sense of frustration. Mr. Watson-Smyth also found an aloofness from the thoughts and feelings of the working man which would never exist in private employment. He thought that a staff college might help to overcome this if it was not confined to the Civil Service. The training should be largely practical and conducted by those with the best experience; this would present the difficulty that suitable teachers would be hard to come by.

Mr. MEIGH (Rockware Glass Syndicate) favoured the establishment of a staff college and confined himself to the question of selecting students. He sympathised with the fear that those not selected would be discouraged and said that this danger would be minimised if the selection was fair and efficient; there must be no pulling of strings and the pushing of candidates with influence; equally, those who went through the college must stand on their own feet and not rely on the "staff college tie" for their further advancement. To ensure that all candidates, including those from small firms, had equal chances, no fees should be payable; the cost of the college should be subscribed outright at the onset and attendance should be free to the best candidates, impartially selected.

Mr. HUTCHINSON (Surrey County Council) urged that the latent talent in the various grades of staff should be diligently sought; that talent was hidden in many unsuspected quarters was proved by the capacity of many temporary entrants to the public service in war-time, who, lacking the background of experience, nevertheless showed that they possessed high administrative qualities. He preferred post-entry training not to be done as a leisure-time occupation, when the student has used his best energies during the day-

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time. He spoke of the useful contacts he made, as a local government accountant, with business men; he wanted such contacts extended and organised.

That administration is not yet universally recognised as a science was the view of Mr. MARCHAND (Vice-Chairman, Institute of Industrial Administration). A staff college was needed, he thought, to ensure the raising of the standards of leadership. The estimates of cost put forward were too modest; the very finest teachers were wanted and they must be properly remunerated. He had believed since the last war that it was none too soon to develop by conscious methods the best leaders throughout all walks of life; in the idea of a staff college he saw the means of creating the leaders who would see us through the peace.

Miss HEWITT (Inspector of Training in the Ministry of Supply) claimed a wide experience had taught her that the more her various fields of activities differed the more she found them alike in their cardinal problems. Every concern thought itself unique, and to cure this parochialism she would like to see a wide field of entry to a staff college. Training could not be completed in six months; it must be continuous; refresher courses related to the practical concerns of life, must be carried on without cessation. Training should be made widely available, if only as one means of avoiding the frustration so common in employment to-day due to the lack of opportunities of advancement; being passed over for admission to the staff college would be less discouraging than the common experience of seeing sons and nephews and nieces of the influential pushed into positions of leadership.

Mr. NOTTAGE (General Post Office) said that, though the staff college might provide a "hard core" of training, he would like to see the problem dealt with on broader lines so that every technician had some administrative training and every administrator some background of technical knowledge. It was important not to forget that the rank and file provide the recruiting ground, not perhaps of the generals, but of the sergeants and captains who form so important a part of the national leadership; training, therefore, must not be restricted to a select few but made available as widely as possible.

Mr. MACKAY (Oxford), who had had twenty years' business experience before he undertook teaching, thought that the problems of selecting entrants for a staff college would not be difficult. He emphasised the importance of appointing teachers who had, in addition to practical knowledge, the ability to put that knowledge across. Many good administrators, because of the excessively hard early life they led, cracked up between 40 and 50, and Mr. Mackay suggested that the setting up of the college might so lighten their burdens as to provide a remedial force.

The need to educate public authorities and the public in the value of teaching administration was the theme of Mr. GARRARD (N.A.L.G.O.). In local government, he said, the technical and professional qualifications are over-valued; he would require every candidate for higher positions to hold a diploma in public administration and to prove that he had had administrative experience.

That administration consists of qualities and cannot be taught was the view expressed by Miss CLEMENTS (Civil Service Clerical Association). After a course at Ruskin College and others at the London School of Economics and the Institute of Industrial Psychology, she still felt that she had only learnt the elements of administration; what then could be acquired in the four or five months at a staff college? Those who wished to acquire such training, she thought, would do better to avail themselves of existing facilities, such as those to which she had referred, than to expect a new institution to be created for them.

Mr. BRECH (Institute of Industrial Administration) asked whether the college should be reserved for those who would occupy the highest positions, or should provide, over a period of time, tuition for every senior executive. He remarked that one of the most important aspects of administration was the control of a group of people in operation. The essential task of the college, therefore, should be to show how to inculcate leadership, tone, morale. Mr. Brech reminded the conference that the vast majority of manufacturing concerns in this country employed fewer than 500 people; it was essential, therefore, that the control of the college should not be restricted to the large undertakings. Small firms must have their due share.

Mr. SYDNEY LARKIN (Borough Treasurer, Coventry) could see little or no connection between the arguments of the advocates of a staff college and their conclusions.

## POST-ENTRY TRAINING FOR ADMINISTRATION

Mr. BYNG, commenting on the main points in the debate, agreed that a staff college would not provide the answer to all post-entry problems and that other forms of training were also desirable. He agreed with Mr. Howard Roberts that the college should not be university-controlled. He saw no difficulty in selecting entrants: the Civil Service practice of annual appraisal of every official was commendable and would form the basis of selecting those to go to the college. Mr. Byng agreed that selection must be fair and free from any sort of influence or "wire pulling." He thought that the exhaustion between 40 and 50 to which Mr. Mackay referred was often due to a failure to delegate responsibility. In reply to Mr. Garrard he said that the value of administration was being ever more widely appreciated, even among local authorities.

Opening the second session of the conference on Sunday, Professor LASKI outlined the principal arguments in his paper. We are in the middle of a major social revolution of greater significance than the fall of the Roman Empire or the transition from feudalism to capitalism, and we should re-examine the problems of administration in the light of that fact. The Civil Service reflected the character of society and was hag-ridden with snobbery. The enthusiastic intentions of Whitleyism in 1919 to educate the Service had ended in pathetic failure. Professor Laski, as a member of the Civil Service Arbitration Tribunal, saw evidence of constant frustration, of ability unrewarded, and no coherent attempt to discover the best men and women for promotion. The administrative grade constituted a private chapel to which entrance was forbidden; the first necessity was to humanise conditions of work so that the mass of the Service ceased to be engaged on the manufacture of "the nth part of a pin." Professor Laski said he had no enthusiasm for the proposal to create a special staff college. An academic environment for the education of the administrator was desirable and would not be dangerous. Practical men generally failed to expound the principles on which they worked. The academic mind was aware of principles of action while the practical mind did not realise that they existed. Lord Haldane had testified to the value of academic training in administration for military officers before the war of 1914-18. He concluded by urging that civil servants should concern themselves with the purposes for which they worked. He believed that those who called for neutrality were in fact always conservative in their outlook.

Mr. L. C. WHITE (General Secretary, Civil Service Clerical Association) said that he had been opposed to the idea of a staff college but now that he had heard the arguments of its advocates he was positively frightened of it. The problem of selection was fundamental and had not been dealt with by any of the speakers. The case of the Hendon Police College was relevant, in spite of Mr. Byng's disclaimer; it showed how a selected minority obtained the best chances of advancement, a fact which set up a strong spirit of antagonism within the Service. Moreover, the benefits of such a college had not in fact been explained. Training in the staff college at Camberley had not avoided major military errors on the part of those who had been through it. The solution of the problem of educating the Service lay within the Service itself; they must procure better vocational training and methods of ensuring visual contact between administrators and those with whom they were called upon to deal. The higher ranks were criticised for not mixing with those outside the Service; but an Act of Parliament forbade the lower ranks from associating with those whose interests they shared.

Mr. L. WELSH (London County Council Staff Association) described the facilities for post-entry training in the Council's service. He described the attitude of the Council and its staff as friendly but lukewarm. A new examination of the question, which would include the proposed staff college, was now in progress, and was being linked with the need for a reformed staffing structure so that education should not be wasted. If staff were to be better trained, as they should be, there must be facilities for selecting the most suitable for promotion and no artificial barriers, based on accidents of birth or means or method of entry, to the advancement of merit. A proper system of staff appraisal was an essential part of a sound system of promotion. More important than any of the other methods of post-war training Mr. Welsh considered to be the actual participation of the staff in the control of their own jobs; he was glad to see the tendency for the Council's staff and other

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public officers to seek, through joint efficiency councils and the like, to decide organisational methods, and this would lead, naturally and properly, to their examining the ends as well as the means of the administrative processes with which they were concerned.

Miss A. W. MORGAN (L.C.C. Branch of N.A.L.G.O.) agreed that there should be a wider field of selection of senior administrators and that they should graduate in the school of experience. But she opposed the idea of a staff college largely because the feelings of those not selected would be injured. Her own university experience did not lead her to support the criticisms she had heard of it; it had made her a more efficient officer and given her a broader outlook on the tasks she had to face.

Mr. W. A. ROSS (formerly of the Ministry of Health) criticised many of Professor Laski's assumptions. He thought that the traditional attitude of the civil servant was the result of a compromise between the interests of the community and of the individual. He did not find civil servants conservative, but leaning rather towards the Fabian point of view; they were certainly not capitalistic, not on their modest salaries. It was true that they lacked the qualities of audacity and experimentalism, surely that applied equally to all ranks of the nation between the two wars. He did not want the staff college to be in a university lest it be overwhelmed with sport; at the same time he agreed that it should furnish contacts with men of academic minds, many of whom, he remarked, were also practical men of the world. He was not sure that the qualities admired in men like Sir Robert Morant—a synthesis of brains and character—could not be taught; we needed to get a basis in religion and ethics. The danger of getting fossilised after 40 could be avoided by keeping an interest in hobbies, not concentrating entirely on official duties, and above all by joining a church or ethical society.

Major URWICK, defending the staff college proposal, agreed with Professor Laski on the need for re-shaping the public service to deal with new problems and with Mr. White on the evils of sub-divided labour and over-specialisation among the lower ranks; the latter he said, was an example of bad administration on the part of those responsible. He did not favour Professor Laski's suggestion that the kind of training needed could be given entirely in a university, because he did not believe that only teachers could teach. The staff college, though good in itself, was only a part of a comprehensive scheme of training. It should not be impossible to select entrants fairly and efficiently on grounds of merit alone. To make the scheme a success it was necessary to secure the co-operation of the staff and of their organisations. If only 25 per cent. of the graduates of the college proved themselves worthy of future leadership, it would be well justified.

Mr. ASHTON-GWATKIN (Foreign Office) criticised remarks in Professor Laski's paper as being inaccurate or misleading.

That civil servants were themselves well aware of the need for some changes was claimed by Mr. E. H. RITSON (Treasury). New men, new minds, more technicians, a search for talented juniors, the elimination of misfits, the widening of contacts, the fostering of initiative and energy were necessary for the greater tasks ahead; but it was not only outside critics who knew this, but civil servants themselves. Mr. Byng's definition of administration was too narrow in that it omitted consideration of what is to be done and concentrated on the way to do it; yet civil servants were largely concerned with the formulation of policy; this could not be taught in a staff college.

SIR GWILYM GIBBON said that Professor Laski considered administration normative instead of empirical and that this was fundamentally wrong. Sir Gwilym believed that delegation of responsibility was the best method of training; that the contact desired with outsiders could be better furnished by other means than a college; and that while he favoured research and study by civil servants he had yet to be convinced that Professor Laski's proposal of a sabbatical year would be justified; in the teaching profession it had produced a lot of pedestrian work.

Mr. A. J. WALDEGRAVE feared that, in his opposition to the staff college, Mr. White was leading his members down a road which led only to a blank wall. The latest Civil Service Whitley report on promotion, with which Mr. White's organisation was associated, agreed that annual report forms should call for an indication of those of outstanding promise; how, then, could Mr. White logically oppose a scheme to give them the advancement they deserved?

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Mr. EVES (Ministry of Labour) urged that the question of the college should be seen in proportion as part of the larger one of training generally. The understanding of administrative principles might be aided by requiring the inclusion of such subjects in entrance examinations. The making of personal contacts was better done on the job than in college. Senior officers of the Ministry of Labour, for example, should work in Exchanges and meet the clients of the department face to face. He feared that a clerk in a small Exchange would stand little chance of selection for the college as compared with those at headquarters.

Mr. BISHOP (Ministry of Food) said that it was unfair to prejudice the idea of a staff college solely by the risk of possible ill-feeling over selecting the entrants. We must welcome anything which would remove departmentalism, like the German system of training which covered all three armed forces. The college should be under university control, because only thus could we ensure freedom of thought and a fundamental approach to its problems.

Replying to the discussion, Mr. WHITE referred to the deep-rooted suspicion of the proposed college among the members of his union; even if he did not lead them to that attitude, it already existed in a strong form. He pointed out that, even at this stage in the debate, no definition had been given of the means of selection for entry. Before any such plan was proceeded with, the grounds for suspicion must be removed and an adequate system established for securing that the abler members of the lower grades emerged from the ranks for future advancement.

Professor LASKI dealt briefly with the major points which had been raised on his paper and introductory remarks. Mr. Ross's reference to the compromise between the interests of the individual and those of the community he said was a common description of the methods of every régime in history and did not in practice offer any real description of its methods. He had not said that civil servants were capitalists, but that the purpose of the system of government which they administered was capitalist. He agreed that the lack of initiative shown by the Civil Service reflected the same defects in the rest of the community, but that was not in itself a justification. He did not say that only professors could lecture; he had heard business men and other amateurs lecture well; but teaching was a specialist task involving the selection and presentation of essential principles which could seldom be done by practical men. Professor Laski went on to deal with Mr. Ashton-Gwatkin's detailed comments on his attitude to the Foreign Service. Referring to Mr. Ritson's claim that the Civil Service is aware of its own shortcomings, Professor Laski asked why so little had been done to remedy them. He spoke of the vehemence and passionate inaccuracy of Sir Gwilym Gibbon's remarks; a social system, he said, must be normative but empirical within a normative framework. Sabbatical years might produce pedestrian work, but at least they freshened the mind and caused something better than was possible without them. Training in all three arms was already provided in England through the College of Imperial Defence. In Professor Laski's view the deficiencies in the British Army were due to the refusal of the public to take it seriously between the wars and to what Mr. Lloyd George described as the military tendency to place birth first, deportment second, and intelligence third in the requisites for a good soldier. Mr. Byng's proposal for a staff college had yet to be justified, he said. He was inclined to think that it was less than adequate to the needs of the situation. The Civil Service must bend its mind to training the persons within it from the bottom to the top; to improve educational opportunities within it; and to adopt the type of machinery mentioned by Mr. Welsh for securing, through joint committees, improved organisation of the work to be done.



# The Scabies Order, 1941, is a Practical Proposition\*

By IAN E. MCCrackEN, M.D.

AS the title indicates this paper is set in a rather narrow and specialised field. There is, however, at the present time some controversy in public health circles over the correct apportionment of administration between medical and lay personnel. With every extension of the field of public health the complexity of administration increases, and though medical men as a body are not trained for administration they alone are conversant with the crux of many health matters. Those who are interested in the problem may find in this paper, among other things, indications of the peculiar difficulties presented by this form of division of labour.

## INTRODUCTION

The Order under the Defence (General) Regulations, 1939, which was introduced in October, 1941, and goes by the title of the Scabies Order, has probably attracted little or no attention outside health departments. Even within many of these departments it does not seem to have aroused the critical interest which it deserves, and which it no doubt would have received in more normal times. Perhaps the very mention of the Defence Regulations at once suggests that a measure incorporated in them is just another war-time piece of legislation, and that it is therefore unlikely to have any lasting significance, or it may be that pre-occupation with graver affairs reduces sensitivity to matters, such as those touching "the condition of the people," which in pre-war days were of paramount importance.

A glance through the Order suffices to show that it is essentially one of those widely permissive legislative measures which are regularly showered upon local authorities and which control the trend of local government activities. So much legislation is of course barely more than a broad experiment and additional permissive sections which are incorporated in it serve to initiate and encourage further local reconnaissance along directed paths. Some of these experiments, for example the Smoke Nuisance sections of the Public Health Act, 1936, appear from the start destined to misfire by reason of their precociousness; others, like the Town and Country Planning Act of 1932, are cast on such a grand scale that they can be implemented in full by only a few authorities; while others again, witness the Verminous Persons sections of the Public Health Act, 1936 (the forbear of the Order now being reviewed), are too narrowly conceived ever to prove effective.

Looked at more closely the Scabies Order is found to be delightfully clear of all the above disadvantages. It is opportune without doubt, and is so graded that no authority is too small to encompass part of it, and none too large to cavil at its limitations. It may quite conceivably play a not unimportant pioneer role in a forthcoming era of attack on some of those social conditions which, contrary to a belief held widely, did not pass out of existence with the nineteenth century.

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\* A prize-winning Essay, Haldane Medal Competition, 1943.

## THE SCABIES ORDER, 1941, IS A PRACTICAL PROPOSITION

This short paper reviews a few of the more interesting features of the Order, and offers certain observations on its practical application and effectiveness.

### SCABIES

For the understanding of what follows a word must be said on the disease scabies, but as this will amount rather to a frank exposure of how little is known of its epidemiology than to a technical discourse, no reader need hesitate to proceed on this score. Possibly the rising incidence of the infection throughout urban communities at the present time makes it a not inappropriate matter to bring to the notice of anyone who feels that a greater community of living is an inevitable development during the subsequent stages of the war.

By general recognition scabies is a parasitic skin disease which shows a marked tendency to spread from person to person, and is, broadly speaking, more common in the lower than in the upper social classes. Further, medical opinion is unanimous in attributing the condition to a particular mite and in accepting simple and easily applied parasitocides as a sure cure of the disease. Beyond these points there is no unanimity of opinion, and few expressions of any opinion, save perhaps that rapidity of spread is more marked within households and home surroundings than in shops, factories, public conveyances and the like. The incubation period, the mode of spread, the distribution of the disease, the detailed life history of the mite concerned, all remain matters of conjecture. The significant point is this, that while all is known about the disease which requires to be known for the cure of an individual case, little is known about its epidemiology, that background of infectious disease on which logical control measures are usually based.

In such circumstances how does the Scabies Order, which has been provided "to strengthen the power of Local Authorities in combating the increase of Scabies" set about its task?

### THE SCABIES ORDER

In essence the Order provides that "where a medical officer of health is satisfied, upon information given by a registered medical practitioner or otherwise" that a person is suffering from scabies he may then inspect not only the home of that person but all other persons who share that home, and if he finds that any of those persons are also suffering from scabies he may require them to be treated at a place of his choosing: he may incidentally require the cleansing and destruction of articles likely to be infected. The examination of persons, be it noted, is to be done at a time and place appointed by the medical officer, and he may authorise others to act for him, and there are in fact no irksome provisos included in the Order which might impede him in making effective use of his powers.

### COMPARISON WITH PREVIOUS LEGISLATION

Contrast the above with the powers granted previously for dealing with cases of this type—powers, as has already been mentioned, to be found in the Public Health Act, 1936. That Act allows local authorities, on a report from a medical officer of health that a person has scabies, to treat that person with his consent or to apply for a court order to treat him if he does not consent, but it makes no provision for detecting or finding cases of scabies or for compulsorily examining suspected persons.

The new powers are comprehensive and cover all phases from suspicion to cure, they provide a means whereby the presence of one case directs search where others are most likely to be found; they promote rapid action by their

freedom from "red tape"; in a word, they aim at attacking cases in the mass. The old powers, on the other hand, were so restricted as to be applicable only in single and exceptional cases of the disease.

Clearly a medical officer of health has now quite remarkable freedom of action against this disease. At his discretion he may, for example, require large numbers of persons to report for examination on no more than a suspicion of a disease which, after all, in the public mind, still hardly amounts to more than a minor ailment.

What check has been placed on this discretionary power? A check of course exists and is an interesting one and lies in the methods which the medical officer would require to adopt to secure enforcement of his requirements. Under the Public Health Act, 1936, enforcement of a requirement in this connection could be secured by application for a court order on the part of the local authority, and as the medical officer of health would, as a rule, have been authorised to act for the local authority in matters of this kind he could readily press for an order.

Under the Scabies Order, however, enforcement is only procurable in accordance with the provision of the Defence (General) Regulations, which state that "proceedings against a person failing to comply with these requirements may be instituted either by a constable and by, or with the consent of, the Director of Public Prosecutions. The medical officer in fact seeking to enforce his requirements must first convince one or other of these parties that action is necessary, and it seems unlikely that either of them will acquiesce too readily in undertaking prosecutions of this kind. Limited powers with ready enforcement have been replaced by wide powers with guarded enforcement. The Scabies Order at first appears to offend our democratic principles, but there are in it safeguards against any bureaucratic officialdom, and it simply backs to the hilt powers of persuasion.

#### COMPULSORY NOTIFICATION

Reference may be made at this point to another way in which the Order diverges from previous practice. Broadly speaking the assistance offered by public health legislation towards combating an epidemic infectious disease has been based in the past on the principle of compulsory notification of the disease. In this way all cases, in theory at least, at once fall within official cognizance, and a picture of the extent, distribution and effect of the disease in the community can be most rapidly developed: so that in due course into this picture suitable control measures can be fitted and their influence evaluated.

Criticism has been levelled at the Scabies Order that it does not proceed along established lines of this kind. It is said that without better information on the incidence and distribution of the disease than is at present available, it is not possible to plan soundly for its control, and that without compulsory notification large numbers of cases will escape observation.

It has always been appreciated, however, that there are certain diseases which would not lend themselves to compulsory notification. For example, its application to venereal disease might be expected to deter control of that disease by aggravating concealment, and similarly the public reaction to notification of a verminous condition, such as scabies, is a matter of conjecture. Another aspect of this point is that an unpredictable number of cases of the more simple diseases do not come before any medical practitioner, and that notifications by practitioners alone cannot be said to cover all cases. Previous legislation has covered this gap by requiring the head of the household to notify cases of notifiable disease within the house, but the public have never accepted their obligations in this connection and the requirement is almost universally regarded as ineffective. In a disease such as scabies, in which self-treatment is attempted

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on a wide scale, there is no doubt that large numbers of cases would never be notified. Lastly, it may be said that compulsory notification of any disease implies that diagnosis of the disease is generally accurate, and that some direct action on the part of the local authority can follow notification; action usually takes the form of providing isolation or treatment or of an investigation to prevent further spread of the infection, and in the absence of some resultant action it is understandable that the practice of notification would lack purposefulness in the minds of medical practitioners and public alike. The official attitude to these points is indicated clearly by the reply of the Minister in September of this year when questioned as to the advisability of making scabies notifiable:—

“I am advised that it would not be appropriate to make scabies notifiable generally, but I am prepared to consider applications from local authorities to have scabies made notifiable in their district, upon being satisfied that the authority have adequate facilities for diagnosis and treatment.”

### PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

No more need be said about notification, but Mr. Brown's reference to adequate facilities for diagnosis and treatment can be the introduction to some practical problems, for the very width of the discretionary powers given by the Order are really a measure of our ignorance of how best to tackle it.

Suppose that a medical officer of health, fortified and encouraged by the Order, embarks on a campaign against the epidemic. He has no difficulty, in an urban area at least, in ascertaining a number, possibly an embarrassing number, of cases; but what percentage of the total cases in his area these may be he has of course no way of knowing. His school medical services, his maternity and child welfare services, his hospitals and clinics can all provide him with information which will comply with the initial requirements of the Order.

To follow up this information in a logical manner and as planned in the Order, requires many things which the medical officer is unlikely to have ready to hand, particularly under existing conditions. Suitable treatment centres and the skilled staff to man them, including medical staff expert in the diagnosis, are perhaps the items which loom largest in his list of deficiencies; but other staff, to inspect households and interrogate contacts, and clerical staff are called for; while a scheme has to be devised for the disinfection of large quantities of bedding and clothing in any comprehensive plan. That some of the medications used at the treatment centres may unexpectedly fall “in short supply,” that cases complicated by skin sepsis and therefore requiring hospitalisation are met with inevitably, and that infants, who as a class readily contract scabies, present problems apart from those of children and adults, are additional complicating factors.

Were medical officers required to make the above provisions forthwith for every case ascertained their task would be unenviable in the extreme. How fortunate indeed that the Order is permissive at every stage. Of the cases ascertained none need to be investigated, or alternatively a few at random may be followed up; treatment is not of necessity provided for any case, and if provided at all may perhaps be limited to one sex or one age group, so that a more simple form of treatment centre, than would be required to serve all types, will suffice.

Proceeding in this way a medical officer can learn how much work this or that part of the scheme will entail, or how the people react to investigation and enquiry about scabies, or how readily they attend for treatment. He will also gain some idea of how common the disease is in his area, of how it is distributed, and of how effective his treatment centres are.

There is of course nothing in the Order compelling medical officers to take notice of any cases in their area. Many rural areas no doubt have no scabies problem, and legislation requiring schemes for the control of the disease to be instituted throughout the land would surely give rise to waste in the use of medical, nursing and lay man-power. It is however unlikely that, in any area in which scabies is epidemic, the medical officer can for long avoid utilising some of his powers under the Order, for the burden of epidemic scabies then falls on the general practitioners, who as a class are quite capable of agitating apathetic health departments over matters which come within the sphere of public health.

As a practical proposition the Order has proved operable after the manner indicated above. It has been possible to make a beginning with simple schemes for the treatment only of school children, and to expand these gradually to include toddlers from welfare centres and war-time day nurseries. As staff, initially untrained, have acquired experience and confidence, the child material has gradually formed an introduction into homes and households, and the adult problems have been tackled. Schemes to meet the needs of infants and cases with marked sepsis have been terminal refinements in a plan to cover the requirements of every type of household infected with scabies.

#### INCIDENTAL VALUE

In the course of this work much naturally has been learnt about the disease itself and much gleaned incidentally about general conditions in homes which are often chronically affected by the disease. Perhaps the most fortunate finding has been that affected families are ready and willing to co-operate in any reasonable schemes which offer them a prospect of relief, and that the very frequency of infection has broken down whatever stigma or embarrassment was once associated with the name Scabies. So rarely are refusals and defaults met with in this sphere that any such cases in no way impede the progress of the work and what value there might be in court proceedings as example and propaganda is not required.

Much of the information acquired incidentally about social conditions touches matters which have not previously come closely under the scrutiny of health departments. Questions regarding what baths can be given at home often elicit that no more than a quart or two of hot water is available at any one time, and that the bath itself is no more than a zinc tub, of the size used for the baby in more fortunate homes. The surest method of spreading scabies is bed sharing, and questions put in this connection reveal surprising concentrations of families into one or two beds. Problems of disinfestation of bedding bring to light remarkable collections of materials which serve as combined mattress and blanket.

Some aspects of the conditions were undoubtedly observed by health departments during pre-war slum clearance activities, but investigations in that connection, now in abeyance, mainly surveyed bricks and mortar, while investigations into scabies, in the remaining slum households, gets a little nearer to surveying flesh and blood. It has been said that one of the best yard-sticks to social conditions in any area is its infantile mortality rate. Since the last war, however, this rate has been so reduced that, for reasons which are beyond the scope of this paper, it no longer forms such a sensitive index of environment: and it may well be that the scabies rate of a community, if such rates are ever established, would provide a new index.

#### FUTURE OUTLOOK

Thinking along these lines the future of the Scabies Order becomes a matter of some concern. The repeal of Defence Regulations of all kinds will as surely



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be the popular cry at the end of the present hostilities as was the outcry for release from D.O.R.A. in 1919.

Whether epidemic scabies will obligingly fade out with the restoration of peace is not so certain, but the principles introduced in the Order are sound and practical and should not be dispensed with lightly.

It is perhaps worth noting that even as it stands, the Order could be utilised by any medical officer of health for campaigning against verminous conditions other than scabies, for though it is entitled the Scabies Order the wording of the text never mentions scabies specifically but refers throughout to "verminous conditions." Given an extension of the Order into a less strenuous and more peaceful era something might be done with it, and something must be done somehow, towards attacking the problem of verminous or lousy heads: a problem which, while it presents no urgency on health grounds, cuts deeply into any complacency over our national standard of personal hygiene.

And, lastly, there is little doubt that epidemic scabies is a world-wide phenomenon, and that elsewhere endeavours are being made to control the disease. Much interest will centre around a post-war comparison of these endeavours, for any solution to the broad problem of scabies will also assist the solution of some of the social problems with which the disease is closely linked.

### CONCLUSIONS

The Scabies Order has been introduced to counter an epidemic of the disease which is "prejudicial to the efficient prosecution of the war." It has been so devised that despite war-time difficulties, good effect can be given to the powers which it confers.

The Order exemplifies the modern tendency towards giving wide discretionary powers to local executive officers in matters which are highly specialised, but it places a premium on persuasion and discounts compulsion.

It short cuts, with immediate benefit, some of the legislative measures usually adopted against epidemic disease.

Practical experience of operating the Order shows that some light is shed by it incidentally on a number of social conditions with which the disease is allied.

## Reviews

### Our Towns : A Close-Up

By the Hygiene Committee of the Women's Group on Public Welfare. Oxford University Press. 5s.

A CENTURY of development of local government, education and social services had left many people with a comfortable feeling that if all was not satisfactory in our towns at least we were well on the way to the abolition of those social and human conditions which had shocked the public conscience. But in September, 1939, there was a rude awakening, when a grand total of about a million and a quarter evacuees left our towns and cities to seek the relative safety of reception areas. Stories very quickly began to come through about some of the evacuees, who apparently presented the country billeting officers with insoluble difficulties until the trek back to the cities eased the billeting problem, leaving the permanent problem untouched.

This book includes an impartial investigation of the charges made against the evacuees, a consideration of the urban conditions from which the problems arose and constructive suggestions for a future policy.

The group of working professional women responsible for the book are admirably qualified for their task by training and first-hand experience of social conditions but, above all, by enthusiasm to alter what is wrong.

The first part of the book deals with "Evacuation: The Window through which Town Life was Seen"; the two middle chapters with details of "Living below Standard"—bad spending, sleeping and feeding habits, delinquency and want of discipline, bodily dirt and skin diseases. Let it be made plain that the writers do not suggest that these problems are attached to all, or the major part of evacuees—only a minority are involved, but the numbers are sufficiently large and the problem is spread throughout the country.

Does the slum-dweller make the slum—or is he a victim of environment? In discussing this question, people tend so often to go to one extreme or the other that it is satisfying to find a book with a well-balanced outlook giving due weight to the various factors in the problem. The failure of the human element and deficiency in individual responsibility is one factor, for people re-act in different ways to the difficulties of the same environment; but economic and social conditions make it extraordinarily difficult for people to live at a reasonable standard and train their children as the citizens of the future should be trained.

The facts of the situation are presented bluntly and the reader feels spurred to action. The lines of action are pretty clearly indicated. Each section of the book includes a list of concrete and practical recommendations and individual citizens are encouraged to probe into conditions in their own towns.

In the last chapter, "The Future Hope," a policy begins to emerge which, if applied in its various aspects, would surely produce a new and better way of life in a comparatively short period. The essence of the policy is that a simultaneous advance must be made on several fronts—a rapid improvement in environment, the achievement of economic security, a far-reaching programme of education carried into the homes as well as the schools. The greatest emphasis is laid on the establishment of nursery schools sufficient in number

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to provide first for *all* children with unsatisfactory homes (and later for all other children whose parents desire to use them), for the nursery school "seems to be the only agency capable of cutting off the slum mind at the root and building the whole child while yet there is time."

This book must be read to be fully appreciated. It will interest almost all public servants. The application of many aspects of the new policy would demand changes in governmental and municipal organisation as well as in the training of public officials. But these reforms can be supported by all who wish to make government the true servant of human beings and "to give humanity its chance."

J. M. T.

### Education for the Public Social Services

Report of the Study Committee, American Association of Schools of Social Work. Chapel Hill. University of North Carolina Press, 1942. Humphrey Milford. 18s. 6d. net.

DURING the last twenty years there have grown up in America a number of schools and departments of colleges which aim to provide a special course of training for entrants into the public social services. Some of these have started life as purely private agencies, designed to meet the needs of the voluntary social service organisations; others have grown up as specialist departments in the Universities.

The great extension of the public social services in America which has taken place under the Roosevelt Administration, and the prospect of a yet further extension in the future, has stimulated the organisers of these various schools and departments to pool their experience and ideas in an attempt to work out a common system for the pre-entry training of personnel for all types of public social service. This book is the result. It is the work of a study group sponsored by the American Association of Schools of Social Work and helped by an advisory Committee of State and Federal social security agencies.

The book sets out systematically to analyse the character of the jobs, both at the operating and supervisory levels, for which the schools are designed to cater; the personnel policies of the agencies responsible for the administration of the social services; and the present organisation and curricula of the schools of social work.

Its most important conclusions are, first, that the quality and efficiency of the personnel recruited for the social services will improve to the extent that social service work comes to be regarded as a profession in itself, with all the privileges and responsibilities of professional status; and, secondly, that it is not only possible but essential to provide a common basis of training for members of this profession, both at the pre-entry stage (when it should as far as possible take the form of a post-graduate course) and by a system of refresher courses.

This is not an inspiring book. It suffers from all the verbosity and lack of pith which is the characteristic vice of books written by committees; and the majority of its all too solid array of facts will only be of interest to students of the American social scene. But it may suggest some useful lines of thought to those in this country who are considering the training problems likely to arise in providing adequate personnel for our post-war social services. D. A. R.

### Public Affairs

Special issue. Dalhousie University. Outside Canada, 25 cents.

THE writer of this note happens to know that, as a consequence of certain personal contacts, the establishment of the Institute of Public Affairs at Dalhousie

Our chief piece of luck is that it is a magnificent text book for students of post-war reconstruction, not because it suggests reforms but because it shows so clearly the structure of staff relationships. Rarely does Dr. Gladden indulge in criticism except in his last chapter, but he gives others plenty to think about, and the book comes at just the right time as everybody is talking of post-war reconstruction and some people are even thinking about it.

Dr. Gladden pays a graceful tribute to the assistance he received from the late Mr. J. A. Dale, though it was with a gentle tinge of regret that one reader noticed the Edwardian "Esq." after Mr. Dale's name. The author speaks of the many blemishes in his work, but I have found very few, and most of these were almost inevitable, for although there are stacks of documents about the Service, it is not really well documented.

Just to get rid of the blemishes. It is not easy to understand why 1858 is chosen as the first date for staff activities in the Service, for the first event to be shown is a petition from the Legacy and Succession Office in 1866, but the actual date goes back far beyond 1858. A case could be made out for Bromley's Civil Service Committee of 1845, but, however, that dealt only with pension matters. Robert Grapes' secret trade union in the Post Office in 1847, of which there is, or was, an interesting record in the Muniment Room at the G.P.O., was the first real attempt at unionism. Then as this in the main is a history of Whitley there should have been a small reference to the Gibb Committee in the Post Office in 1914-15, where for the first time staff officials met high officers of the Department, albeit with an outside chairman to keep them fairly peaceful. Before the publication of the Committee's Reports, the staff was sceptical and somewhat hostile to the idea of equality of discussion. Suffering from an inferiority complex they doubted whether there could be real equality and somewhat distrusted their leaders, but the success of "The Gibb" was a powerful impetus in favour of Whitley principles. The only mention of the Heath Committee, and then not by name, is on page 22, and is inadequate, for the Heath Report brought together all branches of the Service to defeat an attempt to foist something on them, which pretended to be Whitley but was not. That meeting decided that the Service should have Whitley, and as the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself was defeated in open combat on the fair field of Caxton Hall, it deserved something more than a perfunctory and anonymous notice. Two other small things may be observed. Dr. Gladden says (page 61) that the Fawcett Association although a registered friendly society was censured in 1892 for circularising parliamentary candidates. He does not seem to be aware that the registration was merely a blind, intended to protect the men against the rule that postal servants must not combine for trade protection. Every one believed in the existence of this rule, the officials punishing agitators under it and the men adopting various ruses to evade it when, lo and behold, the P.M.G. in the House admitted that there was no such rule and apparently never had been. The Post Office could not censure the Fawcett Association for the rather comical reason that it refused to recognise the very existence of such a thing. What really happened was that Clery and Cheesman of the Fawcett Association sent out the objectionable circular on the eve of a general election and the P.M.G., back in office for two days after the defeat of his party, did two discreditable things, only one of which concerns us. He dismissed Clery and Cheesman, the sorters, not the officials, and it is only necessary to add that sixteen years later, Sydney Buxton, after personal investigation, offered reinstatement. Dr. Gladden's statement (page 17) that after 1899 it became the practice to accept representations from the Postmen's Federation Secretary, although he was outside the Service, is not quite accurate, and it recalls a little comedy. The Secretary of the Federation refused to accept the ban and

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occasionally submitted a Federation request signed by himself. Sometimes it was apparently ignored, sometimes returned with the curt endorsement that it was irregularly submitted, but now and again the Secretary would note with a chuckle that his suggestion had been acted upon, and on three occasions by some accident replies were actually sent, though the last from Lord Stanley brought a stern rebuke. A few months later Sydney Buxton granted official recognition, and a particularly foolish chapter in Post Office history was closed.

The author seems to think there is somewhere a legal definition of a civil servant, but I know of none. I know that there is a widespread belief in the Service that no one is a civil servant unless he possesses what is usually called a certificate of appointment from the Civil Service Commissioners bringing him within the provisions of Clause 17 of the 1859 Pensions Act. In the first place the certificate is not of "appointment," and a glance at Clause 17 will show that all it does is to lay down the conditions which pertain to a pensionable civil servant, which is quite a different thing. Dr. Gladden says sub-postmasters are not civil servants because they are paid on the basis of the volume of post office business they do, but this will not do, as from 1908 to 1914, when the system was altered, thousands of established provincial Post Office servants were paid on that very basis and eagerly hoped that the next count would take them into a higher class. Surely the commonsense definition of a civil servant is one who works in the Civil Service and comes under its conditions and regulations.

"Civil Service Relationships" does not pretend to be a history of trade unionism in the Service, but it gives the best account that has been published so far, and as for its special subject, Whitleyism, it is far superior to anything which has been written either here or in America. The civil servant who reads it will learn much, including some things indeed which will surprise him, and it would be interesting to see how many could pass a general knowledge examination on the subjects discussed in the book. Who knows, for example, that one Whitley Council helps lame dogs over stiles by timely and kindly financial help and advice? Who, outside one particular association, knows that the members of that union are provided with a shopping guide which seems to be an odd trade union activity, although in fact it was more common formerly than now? And who could say off-hand that the adoption of various towns and villages in the special areas during the distressful periods originated in the Civil Service, and the Banks and Big Business followed behind?

Dr. Gladden rightly praises the energy and ability with which the Customs and Excise Whitley is run, and indeed in my time it was easily the best of the councils, for the Staff Side really desired to co-operate, and that could not always be said for all the councils at least all the time. He notes that the Post Office Whitley has not always run smoothly, and truth to tell this is partly owing to the unwieldy size of the U.P.W. It is awkward to have a union which is larger than all the others put together, for it sometimes breeds arrogance and sometimes suspicions of arrogance where there is none.

The fact that Whitley has not functioned so well in the Local Government Services is well known, and the reason is a curious one. Civil servants, even when members of outside unions, have tended to form inside unions. Dr. Gladdens records the establishment of a Federated Council of Government Employees as far back as 1891, and it is probable that the lure of a possible pension was the impelling cause.

The local government worker to whom a pension is not so important as in the Service, and partly perhaps because unionism came later into local government work, tends to remain in his outside union, although there is the very important exception of N.A.L.G.O. On the whole Civil Service unionism has tended to be centripetal, that of local government, centrifugal.



The book mentions the abolition of the Civil Service Arbitration Board in 1922, and it must always remain a puzzle why the Treasury should have desired abolition for the Board was the greatest safeguard the Treasury possessed. My Lords are exceedingly vulnerable to the charge of wasting the taxpayers' money, and it was understood that, in 1915, the Treasury was not averse from granting war bonus but wanted the protection of an arbitration award, and as Dr. Gladden points out, the saving effected by the abolition of the Board was small.

There is no time to deal with the many subjects of the book, but every reader should read for himself the whole book, of course, and he should particularly read the excerpt from the petition of the Excise Staff on page 14, for he will see at a glance how far we have travelled.

Now, for the controversial part, and the heading of one section, "Evils of Trade Union Professionalism," is promising enough, but does not fulfil its fair promise. The argument is that the professional trade unionist may not remain a servant but become a dictator, and this is true, but it is not easy to see what we are going to do about it. The same suggestion can be made against every captain of industry, and no trade union secretary is half as dictatorial as the chairman of a big business at the annual meeting.

The heathen may rage, but when the vote is taken the chairman calmly announces that the Board have so many thousand proxies and the heathen find they have imagined a vain thing. I know of nothing comparable to that in the trade union movement, and the "floor" not infrequently carries an important motion against the platform, and incidentally the "floor" is not always wise.

Dr. Gladden envisages a dreadful time when members of large groups will tend to get equal pay, when promotion by seniority alone will flourish, and a general state of stagnation may supervene only to be broken up by the strong, silent men of the administrative class. This will apparently be the result of a period when so few grievances will remain that the professional trades union leader will go scratching round to find something to justify his existence or otherwise, like poor Othello, his occupation will be gone. When will this time come? An acute thinker like Dr. Gladden must realise that the Service is not static, and changes in methods and in the cost and standard of living will provide plenty of work for the union officials.

Theoretically the danger is there, but it is not a very practical one, and while the learned doctor has a right to frighten us he should not do it with a turnip lantern.

This review has run to such length that I have no space to deal with many other aspects of this interesting book and must conclude with a note on the author's little lament that the Staff Side rarely put forward any suggestion except for their own personal benefit. There are exceptions as he notes, and one hopes the number will grow, but it must be remembered that Official Sides are somewhat jealous of Staff Sides entering fields which they regard as their own preserves, and there is a deeper reason. Fawcett wrote that the resentful memory of an injustice lingers long after the injustice has been remedied, and the same thing applies to repression. Twenty years is really a short time, and before Whitley the general feeling among the heads was that the staff should not meddle with things above them, and this feeling was sometimes pretty brutally expressed, as when some men submitted a plan for the better lay-out of duties and were told that there was a superior staff for that kind of work and were reprimanded for wasting their time, their own by the way, on matters which did not concern them.

Much has been done to improve matters, but much more remains to be done before we can reach that ideal co-operation desired by Dr. Gladden and all of us.

My final word is that this is a book every civil servant should read and possess.

# The Study of Public Opinion

## An Aid to Administrative Action

By STEPHEN TAYLOR, M.D., M.R.C.P.

SCIENCE is frequently accused of forcing the pace by springing inventions on an unready world—with the result that aeroplanes drop bombs on civilians, instead of carrying convalescents to sanatoria in the South of France. The truth is that the speed of scientific advance is unequal; mechanical and physical invention has outstripped the sciences of human organisation; and economics and sociology are only just beginning to catch up. A time may soon come when the social implications of a new invention are studied as carefully as manufacturing processes before production is begun. The scientific study of potential markets is a step in this direction.

Those of us who believe that the future must belong to the democratic society, rather than to any form of oligarchy or dictatorship, must be on the alert to find new ways of making democracy more effective, and of removing its obvious faults. The new social science of public opinion study is probably as important a step forward as the introduction of the secret ballot. But its implications are, as yet, far from universally realised.

Books have been written on the national intelligence; but their authors do not claim that the national intelligence is an entity. If anything, it is an average of the intelligence quotients of the whole population; and over a number of years, it provides an index of the changes in national brain power. In spite of theoretical disputes about its nature, innate intelligence is an easy thing to measure. It remains constant for the individual, and is almost unaltered by education or mental environment. Public opinion presents a more complex problem. In the first place, the number of subjects on which the public may hold opinions is as wide as human knowledge. In the second place, the nature of opinions held on many subjects is constantly changing. The study of national speeds of change is fascinating and unexplored; it may provide numerical indices of national stability.

For all practical purposes, public opinion studies have been confined to two groups of opinions:—

- (a) Those held in connection with commodities offered for sale to the public, and the effect on opinion produced by advertisements for these commodities; this type of study is covered by the term "market research."
- (b) Those opinions relating to political problems in their widest sense—economic, social or international.

This is partly because such studies have been purposive; they are a costly form of scientific research, and money has not been available for academic experiment. But there is a group of subjects about which it would be almost universally admitted no studies are necessary. Such subjects are either plainly self-evident—that a man walks on two legs and a cow on four—or so abstruse that not one in a thousand people know of the existence of the subject, let alone have opinions about it. Yet even in this latter group, opinion studies among experts may be most illuminating, especially to the intelligent layman called upon to take action on the advice of expert witnesses. Between these two extremes—the abstruse

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and the self-evident—there exists an enormous number of subjects on which it would be of value to know what the public thinks. At its widest, everyone producing goods or services in any form for the community should be able to do his job better if he knows the views of those he is serving. That is not to say that he should follow those views. It may rather be his duty to follow a different course. But if he is to be successful, he must explain his action to the public, and gain their co-operation in his policy. In so far as his aim is benign and his explanation honest, he is an educationist. In so far as his aim is selfish and his explanation fraudulent, he may be described as a propagandist.

In parenthesis, it may be said that there are those who define propaganda as any action designed to alter the thoughts or behaviour of other people. This definition is altogether too sweeping; since most actions have a behaviour-influencing aspect, it includes a great part of human activity; and it deprives us of a useful term of obloquy. The dissemination of falsehoods for selfish interests is a process which deserves to be exposed, and if we have a convenient label for it in the word propaganda, the process is very much easier. We are entitled to know the truth about a shaving soap or a political leader if we are to behave reasonably, and the process of informing us is education, whether the medium is a poster or newspaper. If a special word is required for the mass dissemination of truthful information, the term publicity meets the need.

## PUBLIC OPINION AND POLITICS

Before we start to examine the nature of public opinion in detail, and the ways of assessing it, it is worth while looking at the relationship between public opinion and political action. In Britain this relationship appears to be extremely close—perhaps closer than in any other country. Yet in even the most dictator-ridden community, there is a fairly intimate connection. As Hume remarked (quoted by Dicey<sup>1</sup>): “it is on opinion only that Government is founded; and this maxim extends to the most despotic and most military governments, as well as to the most free and most popular. The Soldan of Egypt or the Emperor of Rome might drive his harmless subjects against their sentiments and inclination; but he must at least have led his mamelukes or praetorian bands, like men, by their opinion.” Or, in other words, “You can’t fool all the people all the time.”

About once every five years, British public opinion exerts a direct influence on the course of history. By the democratic process of the secret ballot, the people of Britain choose their law makers. It is sometimes argued that the secrecy of the ballot box makes a general election an expression of privately held opinion rather than public opinion. It is true that social ostracism may be suffered by the voter who makes it known that he has voted against his own group or herd; but such people often obtain positive satisfaction from this form of martyrdom; further, opinion poll interviewers have no difficulty in obtaining from strangers information about the way they voted or intend to vote, and this checks with subsequent or previous election results. It appears, then, that for the great majority of people, private and public opinion in parliamentary elections approximates closely.

Among the factors influencing the behaviour of the voter are the policies of the parties, the party leaders, the individual candidates, the party publicity or propaganda, and the traditional behaviour of the voter or his group. One may speculate that policies and traditional behaviour are most important for men, and the party leaders and candidates for women. But this is speculation only. Opinion studies at future general elections may elucidate these points.

<sup>1</sup> A. V. Dicey. “Law and Public Opinion in England.” (Macmillan.)

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It is of greater interest to study the relationship between politics and public opinion during the intervening periods between elections, since the connection is then less obvious but still very real. It manifests itself at two different tempos—sudden and gradual:—

- (a) *Sudden*.—From time to time, a sudden crisis of opinion manifests itself and makes the Government falter or alter its course. A recent example of such a crisis arose over the Pensions Appeal Tribunals Bill, during June, 1943. Public sentiment and parliamentary opinion coincided to make the government reverse its policy.

A still more dramatic example was the fall of the Chamberlain Government in May, 1940. The Government had not even suffered a Parliamentary defeat. After the debate of 8th May, 281 members voted for the Government and 200 against. Yet such was the strength of public opinion that the Prime Minister felt called upon to resign.

This sensitivity of the Government to fluctuations of public opinion constitutes one of the great strengths of modern British democracy. Put in the crudest way, it exemplifies the old Liberal principle that it is the business of government to avert revolution by reform.

- (b) *Gradual*.—More remarkable still is the way new ideas or ways of thought manifest themselves through Parliament, and finally erupt into Government action. It is now many years since social scientists first showed that the main causes of poverty are unemployment, ill-health of wage-earners, and large families. Slowly these facts have been made clear to the public at large. And slowly, parliamentary debates on positive employment policies, comprehensive sickness insurance, and family allowances have become a commonplace.

Similarly, the modern discoveries about monetary policy and the use of industrial controls to promote national welfare have become commonplaces of discussion both inside and outside Parliament.

Though to us who are spectators of current events, the process of development of positive opinion seems painfully slow, it is perhaps more rapid than in any other period of British history. If, however, legislation is to keep pace with technical advance, it must be more speedy still in the future.

How comes it that Parliament and opinion so often succeed in moving hand in hand? Two major causes suggest themselves:—

- (a) *M.P.s are fairly typical of the population*.—Statistically, M.P.s may be a poor sample. They are above the average age; they are probably above the average intelligence; they are far above the average income; and they are predominantly male. But what the ladies in Parliament lack in numbers they make up in wisdom, wit, and solidarity. There is always a miner ready to speak on mining problems with first-hand knowledge; a doctor ready to speak on health; and a tradesman ready to put the small traders' point of view. This apparently fortuitous typicality is an expression of the homogeneity of the British population; it is also an expression of the wideness of the net from which the British politician is drawn; and this in its turn reflects the sensitivity of party organisations to public opinion.

- (b) *Parliament is in direct touch with public opinion*.—An M.P. or a member of the Government keeps in touch with public opinion by the following means:—

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(i) He receives letters or deputations from his constituents or from organised groups. Letters or deputations from organised groups probably reflect accurately the feeling within the group concerned. But this may be very different from the opinion of the public as a whole. This does not invalidate the group opinion, but it must be looked on as only part of the evidence.

Post-bag analyses have been exhaustively studied. As a regular index of public opinion they are of very little value; the people who put pen to paper have either an individual problem or grievance, or an individual foible which they want to air. But in times of crisis, post-bags do at least serve to show that strong feeling exists among the public; even then, however, they are of little value in indicating the percentage of people holding different views. By and large, it may be said that the M.P. who relies only on his post-bag is likely to be seriously misled in his reading of public opinion.

(ii) He reads as much of the Press as time and inclination permit him to do. Even assuming he is able to make an exhaustive study of the daily and weekly national and local Press, he is faced with a series of difficulties:—

(1) The Press has a double function. It aims at both reflecting and forming opinion, and it often fails to differentiate which it is doing at any particular time. This applies equally to the daily and weekly Press.

(2) The Press is in peace-time occasionally subject to commercial or advertising pressure.

(3) The national dailies are written largely by journalists living in an essentially journalistic community. Though their "hunches" are often right, the wisest of them would admit that their luck does not always hold, and that they would sometimes benefit from three days a week away from the Fleet Street atmosphere. In this respect, they provide a contrast with the local provincial Press, the writers of which are members of the local community as a whole. On purely local matters, the balanced provincial journalist is an admirable mirror of public opinion. But since local communities are usually more interested in local happenings than national affairs, the provincial journalist is of little assistance on broad issues.

(iii) He visits his constituents, attends local functions, and listens to questions raised at meetings and on committees. This method of study is also beset with difficulties. Often the M.P. is expected, or even inclined, more to speak than to listen. His very position makes him a target for axe-grinders. But if he can become a real member of his local community, meeting his constituents as friends, it is one of the most valuable methods of sensing opinion available to him. Unfortunately, his duties often leave him little time to carry it out.

(iv) He may examine such studies of public opinion as are published in the Press. But he may regard these with considerable scepticism. Further, he may not have the necessary technical knowledge to assess the validity of the results.

It is clear, then, that Parliament's contacts with public opinion are rather haphazard. It says a great deal for the diligence and skill of members that so much is achieved with such inadequate means. If at times M.P.s reflect the



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gossip of the club, the home, the office, or the trades union, this is not altogether a bad thing. But the conscientious M.P. who really wishes to know public opinion, so that he may bear it in mind in forming his own judgment, has a heavy task, to say the least. If public opinion studies can be codified and presented in an easy assimilable form, this part of his duty will be greatly lightened.

There are those who oppose opinion studies on first principles. They say that if the opinion of the country is continuously recorded and clearly expressed, there is a grave danger that the Government and Parliament will follow rather than lead opinion; and a Government may fail to do its duty by the country if the course of duty is clearly unpopular. The case against this view is as follows:—

- (a) Published studies suggest that public opinion is often ahead of the Government, rather than lagging behind it. There was, for instance, a widespread demand for the conscription of women long before the Government introduced it.
- (b) The absence of exact studies has not prevented politicians in the past from giving the strength of public opinion as an excuse for neglecting unpopular action. The most celebrated example of this is the case of Mr. Baldwin's refusal to re-arm when German re-armament started.
- (c) In a democracy, the march of science cannot be halted. Sociologists and commercial scientists are going to study public opinion, come what may. He who can use science as his guide is more likely to succeed than he who refuses its assistance. Admittedly, some politicians possess an almost intuitive skill in reading public opinion on major issues. But even these fortunate people cannot cover the whole field; there inevitably remain blind spots; and only opinion studies can complete the picture.

Public opinion studies, then, have come to stay. So far from hampering democracy, they may rather hasten its progress. The politician who neglects them does so at his peril. The politician who uses them aright will find he has added a new sixth sense to his political understanding. And the statesman who intends to lead rather than follow will find that they provide him with a chart of the country in which he must travel, in place of a speculative mental sketch map. Finally, the public themselves will be able to check the validity of the studies against their own views; and if they are satisfied, they will be able to feel that the voice of "the man in the street" is at last making itself heard.

### PUBLIC OPINION AND THE ADMINISTRATOR

What holds for the politician holds equally for the public administrator. It is to him that the politician turns for technical advice, and when such technical advice covers not only the material problems, but also the apparently more imponderable problems of public relations, it is doubly valuable. This applies equally, whether the politician and the administrator are operating in a local, a national, or even a supra-national arena. Opinion studies, if they are valid, remove an important unknown from the equational picture of any situation. The size of a national harvest, the population of a borough, the rate of spread of an epidemic, and the essential angle of a sewer are all matters which can be determined by the expert. It is possible to be equally precise in determining public support for or opposition to an increase in the rates, a new housing project, a diphtheria immunisation campaign, or a projected treaty with a foreign Power.

It will frequently be the duty of both politician and administrator to form rather than follow public opinion. This task of public education is as much a

task for the specialist, as are opinion studies. But, though both may be included under the broad heading of public relations, it is essential to maintain a clear functional separation between output work—that of the specialist in publicity and functional adult education—and intake work—that of the specialist in opinion studies. If the two are combined, the publicist finds himself in the almost impossible situation of having to report objectively the failure of his favourite campaigns—which might tax the intellectual honesty of a Newton.

#### THE NATURE OF PUBLIC OPINION

At its widest, public opinion is the opinion of the entire public; it is convenient arbitrarily to exclude citizens under 21 and those confined in mental hospitals and prisons. As thus defined, public opinion can only be expressed by means of a secret and compulsory plebiscite—which history shows to be one of the most doubtful weapons, a favourite means of justification for dictators, from Napoleon to Hitler. But if mass expressions of opinion are undesirable as an instrument of policy, mass assessment—for information only—is harmless, except to those who seek to misrepresent opinion. And it is as simple as a plebiscite is complicated.

Two types of public opinion must be clearly recognised:—

- (a) Spontaneously expressed opinion.
- (b) Solicited opinion.

Many, perhaps most, of the British public do not spontaneously express their views on current topics; they may in fact have no views; or they may be naturally quiet or reticent. Public opinion as assessed by the Press and Parliament is almost entirely confined to spontaneously expressed opinion. It is this vocal opinion which is influential between election times; and even at election times, it appears probable that the trends of thought of the non-articulate follow closely those of their articulate friends.

Articulate or spontaneous opinion may be further sub-divided:—

- (a) Expert opinion—the views of those who know most or all of the relevant facts.
- (b) Metropolitan opinion—this may differ considerably from provincial, Scottish, or Welsh articulate opinion.
- (c) Pressure group opinion—the views of those with an interest in the matter under consideration; for example the opinions of trade unions, employers' federations and commercial associations. Pressure group opinions are generally publicised, but it may often be in the interest of the group to make it appear that its views are those of the public as a whole.

Articulate opinion is not a perquisite of any social class. Views are expressed by rich and poor, men and women, old and young. But articulate opinion does tend to be a little more intelligent than inarticulate opinion. And it is certainly more varied, and the range of views expressed is larger.

Most public opinion studies have been based on solicited opinion. Great care has been expended on devising questions which are free from bias and can be understood by all, and on working out methods of sampling so that the individuals solicited are representative of the whole community under examination. These studies are of the greatest value where an accurate knowledge of mass thought and behaviour is required. But studies of spontaneous opinion are equally necessary if the picture is to be complete, if new opinions are to be detected, and if the full richness and range of opinion is to be examined. And they are no more difficult to carry out.

## THE STUDY OF PUBLIC OPINION

### METHODS OF STUDYING PUBLIC OPINION

It is sometimes maintained that public opinion is so diverse that attempts to codify it are futile. A simple experiment will convince the objective observer that this is not so. Take any matter which is exciting current interest and ask twenty, thirty or more people for their opinions. It will at once be apparent that there are not twenty or thirty different opinions, but only two, three or four main groups, into which the views expressed fall. Some will support the attitudes they adopt with a wealth of illustration, and some will offer no supplementary information at all. But the main picture will be simple. This is not really surprising, as the number of possible views on most topics is extremely limited.

Broadly speaking, there are two main scientific methods of studying public opinion—the method of observer panels, and the method of controlled interview.

**Observer Panels.**—Panels are of two kinds—those composed of self-selecting volunteers, and those built up by invitation. Self-selecting panels are formed in response to public appeals—through the Press, by advertisement, or over the radio. The volunteers will be of very varying quality; but some of the disadvantages of this can be overcome, if the field is big enough, by sending them a stiff and tricky questionnaire which will weed out those whose intelligence is so low that they are unable to make accurate observations, or whose emotions are so strong that unbiassed recording is impossible. Again, if the field is big enough, some selection is possible on a basis of population density. But one disadvantage will still remain; the self-selecting volunteer is likely to be an enthusiast. If the appeal is for observers of radio audiences' reactions, keen listeners are more likely to respond; if it is for mass observers, readers of Mass Observation's numerous publications are *a priori* likely to swell the ranks. This possible source of bias might be overcome by the simple expedient of appealing for volunteers for one purpose—and then asking their co-operation in an entirely different project.

At this point, it is appropriate to pay a tribute to the pioneer work of the B.B.C. Listener Research Department, and of the Mass Observation organisation. Unfortunately, little of the former has been published, but some details of their panel system are given in the annual B.B.C. Handbook. Mass Observation's many publications, on the other hand, have perhaps done more than anything else to focus interest in Britain on the subject of opinion studies; though, of course, the range of Mass Observation's work is far wider than this.

With an invited panel, a more scientific build-up is possible. But a community-wide organisation is necessary. For a country the size of Britain, some twenty area officers at least will be needed. A large part of their time will be spent on personal recruitment of observers; since no panel remains static, losses at one end have to be replaced at the other. And each new recruit has to be given a lengthy interview, both to make sure he is in sympathy with—and understands—the work, and to enable the area officer to assess the main features of his personality, and possible biases.

Neither the volunteer nor the recruited panel is, in any sense other than geographical, itself a typical cross-section of the population. If it were, it would be useless, since a considerable part of it would be completely inarticulate and incapable of putting pen to paper, let alone recording accurate observations on other people. The aim is rather that each observer should, by the nature of his life or occupation, be brought into touch with a considerable number of other people. And it is desirable that the groups covered by the observers should themselves make up a true cross-section of the community. Thus, say, a third of the observers should be, as it were, specialists in the thoughts, words, and

deeds of housewives; another third might cover industrial workers; a sixth, perhaps, might record specially the opinions of tradesmen, clerical workers, and minor professional people; and so on. These figures are extremely rough. In practice, it is almost impossible to build statistically valid panels; indeed, panel results are always impressionistic, and there is much to be said for avoiding any attempt to treat the results of panel investigations statistically. Exactitude, if spurious, is dangerously misleading.

Having built the panel, how is it to be used? Each member is instructed to report on the reactions of the people he or she meets, and, in an endeavour to produce objectivity, it is usual to ask the member to record also his or her own reactions. At the worst, one obtains the individual reactions of panel members; at best, the members record the spontaneous remarks of their contacts; probably a *via media* is most usual, in which spontaneous material is mingled with the results of stimulated conversations and discussions. Since panel members are seldom paid, it is important not to overstrain their enthusiasm; at the most they should be approached not more than once a month. This means that if one requires material every week, a monthly rota of panel members must be used. It is equally desirable that they should receive something in the nature of a *quid pro quo* for their efforts; and a small special bulletin of some kind will meet the case; while this may give some of the results of investigations, it is important that it should not give any idea of the expectations from current enquiries.

If it is desired to study the ebb and flow of public opinion as a whole, a possible first question would be: "What have been the four main topics of conversation among the people you have met during the past week? What were the views expressed by the majority or by any substantial minority on these topics?"

Another open question is, "What have been the main domestic problems discussed by the people you meet?" Yet another is: "How have the people you met reacted to the main items of news of the past week?" Each of these questions has the advantage that it gives little in the way of a lead; but where some more specific problem is to be studied, a definite lead is usually essential.

The analysis of panel material is by no means easy. If one is dealing with a recruited panel, the area recruiting officers may themselves perform the preliminary codification. This has the advantage of allowing the returns to be judged against the known personalities of the writers. It does, however, introduce the possibility of bias arising from the area officer himself. The collation of the reports of the area officers is a relatively simple process, but again, it is one which calls for great objectivity; at least two assessors should cover the whole of the material; the additional time and labour involved is well worth while.

In Britain, it is possible to draw up a national picture from panel results, since so many of the formative factors have a national distribution. Thus the radio news bulletins are the same from Land's End to John O'Groats; and the eight major national daily papers are truly national in their distribution. Similarly, legislation for England and Wales is almost always on a uniform basis; while Scottish legislation usually runs parallel. There will certainly be differences in opinion between urban and rural areas, and between areas where there are special industrial or commercial problems. But on most broad issues, uniformity rather than diversity will be the rule.

The results of a panel study must themselves be interpreted with care. Since they are a synopsis of the records of a large number of observers, they will present a far more comprehensive picture than is present in the mind of any one person. They will record only articulate opinion, but parallel sampling

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studies suggest that articulate opinion differs only from inarticulate in the range of views expressed, and not in fundamental attitudes. Since the British public, at any rate, is more given to criticism than to praise, an accurate record is often likely to be a painfully carping document.

The great value of panel studies lies in the fact that they reflect spontaneous opinion as it arises; and they do not depend on the skill of the experts in predicting what topics are likely to be of importance.

*Controlled Interviews.*—The essence of the controlled interview technique is that the results are expressed in percentages. Interviews are carried out by trained paid interviewers with a carefully selected cross-section of the public. The way of selecting this cross-section is a technical matter, but there are two main methods. A "random sample" is one made by taking, say, every hundredth or thousandth name from a complete alphabetical list of the population. A "controlled sample" is one made by finding people who fit into a series of groups, in the same proportions as the general population. To quote from "What Britain Thinks," published by the British Institute of Public Opinion (the British Gallup Poll Organisation): "In the Central London area an interviewer will receive instructions to interview 25 people. Of these, two must be unemployed; eleven in the lower income group (under £4 a week), eight in the middle income group, and four in the higher income group (over £10 a week). As regards age, six must be between 21-29, eleven must be between 30-49, and eight must be over 50." (These are pre-war figures.) Whichever method, or variant of these methods, is adopted, the final sample must be checked to see that it is correctly balanced, as against the general population, for sexes, age groups, income groups, and geographical distribution.

It is frequently asked, how large a sample is necessary if it is to be representative of the population as a whole. Surely, it is added, the larger the population, the larger will be the sample needed. The second question is best answered first, and the answer is simply "No." Three thousand people, correctly chosen, from 130 million, will give a slightly more accurate picture than 2,000, equally correctly chosen, from 48 million. Again, 2,000 from 40 million will be more accurate than 1,000 from four million. Provided always the selection is correct, it is the number selected which matters, and not the size of the pool from which the selection is made. The mathematical demonstration of this fact is outside the scope of the present article; but it can safely be accepted as true. The errors arising from the sampling process have been calculated, and they provide the answer to the question about the representativeness of samples. In the case of a simple question with two possible answers, errors are greatest when there is an even split—50-50. Thus, with a sample of 1,000, and a 50-50 split, the maximum error *due to the sampling process* (there may, of course, be other errors) is + or - 4.7; with an 80-20 split, the maximum error is + or - 3.5. With a sample of 2,000 and a 50-50 split, the maximum error is + or - 3.8; with a sample of 3,000, it is + or - 2.8. When a sample is itself divided into three smaller samples, say three age groups, the young, the middle-aged and the elderly, each of the new samples will be subject to appropriately greater margins of error. If, for example, the sample of elderly people numbers 500, the maximum error with a 50-50 split becomes + or - 6.8. In working out the size of his samples, the social scientist will be guided by the degree of accuracy which he needs to obtain. Those who study opinion polls, or any form of research work based on samples, should always find out the size of the sample used, and the range of error of each result.

Interviews themselves may be "open" or "closed." In the open interview, the interviewer is given a topic for discussion, but no set questions. He or she then takes down as nearly as possible verbatim the course of the conversation



which ensues. The art of open interview is extremely difficult; the interviewer must never be a defending or prosecuting counsel, intent on making a case, but rather a cross-examining physician seeking only the truth about the patient's mental state. Patience, tact, complete objectivity, and occasional kindly firmness to bring the discursive witness back to the point, are all needed. In the closed interview, the interviewer is provided with a carefully phrased written questionnaire. As a rule, a small series of open interviews should precede the formulation of a questionnaire. The first questionnaire is then tested out in a small "pilot" enquiry, to make sure that the questions are intelligible to ordinary members of the public, and also to see that they do, in fact, yield the information required. For example, a certain phrase may mean one thing to some people and another to others; a phrase of universal application has then to be discovered.

Do people interviewed answer truthfully? Experience shows that as rule they do. But a watch must always be maintained. Check questions (repeating a question already asked in a different way) are helpful; again answers should always be checked against known facts whenever possible. Replies which involve admitting social guilt present difficulties. When people are reluctant to admit, say, that they believe in licensed brothels, an indirect approach to the subject may reveal the real opinions of the person questioned.

The value of the interview technique depends first on the validity of the sample, and secondly on the choice of questions asked. As has already been mentioned, margins of error of different samples have been carefully calculated, and provided planning is done honestly and intelligently, doubts on the score of sample validity can be set aside. In choosing questions to ask, panel studies, showing what topics are exciting public interest, are a great help. Again, in phrasing questions, bias must be eliminated. Fortunately, the badly framed question is obvious to anyone who studies results intelligently; though untrained or stupid people may be misled.

One particular source of error arises from the use of lists of alternatives; from these lists members of the public are asked to pick out the view which most nearly coincides with their own. This has the effect of unnaturally forcing opinion into a series of dockets which do not in fact exist in peoples' minds. The results of this practice are to be seen particularly in certain polls carried out in America; it may be that American minds differ from British, but certainly in this country the use of these elaborate check lists leads to false results.

Here it is worth pointing out how misleading are the results of postal questionnaires, addressed not to a trained panel but to a sample of the public at large. The returns from such questionnaires are seldom more than 30 per cent., and this 30 per cent. is, as a rule, quite unrepresentative of the population as a whole.

In Britain, the main controlled interview organisation is the British Institute of Public Opinion. It is a branch of the Gallup Organisation, which operates also in America, Canada, Australia, and Sweden. No doubt, after the war, machines will be set up in an increasing number of the democracies. The results of the British Institute are based on samples which are calculated to give results accurate to about 3 per cent., when opinions are equally divided. With opinions unequally divided, the margin of error is less.

Though linked with a national newspaper, the British Institute pursues an independent scientific policy. There is no evidence that results unpopular with the newspaper are suppressed. Indeed, the partnership shows that the Press is ready to disagree with public opinion when it feels this should be done, rather than slavishly to follow it. The most valuable findings of the British Institute are those in which the same question is repeated at intervals. Trends of opinion then become apparent, and fluctuations in opinion can be related to external causes.

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### THE FUTURE OF PUBLIC OPINION STUDIES

As the validity and value of public opinion studies becomes increasingly apparent, the number of users will steadily increase. Already, commercial advertising firms make extensive use of interview methods for studying of advertising campaigns. Two national newspapers publish the results of public opinion polls. The political parties across the Atlantic carefully watch the Gallup and Fortune findings. The public relations officers of Government departments, public bodies, and commercial corporations must increasingly turn to opinion studies to measure the success of their work. There is, then, a real risk that a large number of secret research bodies may be set up, with sectional or sectarian interests; and that the public goodwill (in the granting of interviews) may be exploited for private gain. What is the answer?

Perhaps the best solution would be the establishment of an academic, but practical, non-profit-making National Institute of Opinion Studies, controlled by a board of the highest integrity, and financed by public subscription, supplemented if necessary by Government grant. Such an institute should publish all its findings, so that authoritative data should be available to all in need of them. It might undertake investigations for outside clients on a cost plus basis, provided the clients raised no objections to publication. It might even be charged by the State with the task of keeping a register of reputable market research agencies and investigators; it could issue to approved investigators cards of authority for use in dealing with members of the public; the issue of such cards should be confined to agencies which agreed to the publication of all their results, possibly within a period of three months of completion of a research. The public would then have a guarantee that an interview granted to an authorised interviewer would be used in the service of the common good, and not for purely sectional interests.

*Note.*—In this article no attempt has been made to discuss the application of the panel and interview methods to problems other than public opinion. Both methods can be used in the study of many social problems, in which opinion plays only a small part. Since Charles Booth's great survey of the Life and Labour of the People of London, universities and other academic organisations have made a number of invaluable studies. Merseyside, York, Tyneside, Southampton, Bristol, Becontree and Dagenham, and many other places have been investigated by social survey. The growth of government intervention in social life during the war has necessitated the development of a national War-time Social Survey for examining the effect of controls on the individual, as well as for assessing the results of government advertising, and other purposes. The validity of the sampling technique is thus officially recognised. As controls seem likely to continue in the post-war world, the War-time Social Survey may well remain a necessity. But in peace-time there can be no reason why the results of its researches should not be made public, and it might well be closely linked with the proposed National Institute of Opinion Studies.

## The War-time Social Survey

Social Research at the Service of the Administrator

By LOUIS MOSS

### THE PURPOSE AND FUNCTION OF THE SURVEY

GOVERNMENT departments have responsibility delegated to them by Parliament for dealing with a wide range of problems involving the social life of the people. These problems can be handled efficiently only by designing

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and carrying out a policy based on adequate knowledge of the needs and opinions of the people. It is the purpose of the War-time Social Survey to supply such information, at the request of the departments concerned. To this end the Survey operates as a social research unit, using and extending for this purpose the methods of Social Research.

The part played by physical research in the conduct of the war is recognised on all sides, and for many years the Government has been aiding the development of such bodies as the Medical Research Council, the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, and the Agricultural Research Council. The Survey is, however, the first organisation created to provide departments with information about the habits, opinions and conditions of the people on whose behalf they operate. Departments, of course, have from time to time benefited from the advice of experts, either as individuals or as members of Royal Commissions, and in the field of social problems the effect of the work of such gifted independent research workers as Charles Booth, the Webbs or Seeböhm Rowntree, must be fully recognised. It is nevertheless true that so far Social Research has not played in public life the part which its subject-matter warrants, or which is in any way comparable with the role of physical research.

The field of Social Research covers the description and classification of social conditions, the habits and customs which make the pattern of social life and the attitudes which people have to these facts and institutions. It is clear from this that there are few problems of the administrator on which the social research worker could not throw some light, and later on in this article an account is given of some of the subjects on which the Survey has been asked to provide information. It is an interesting sidelight on the Survey's work that in supplying such information it helps departments to meet some very common, though not always well-founded, criticisms. Thus it is often said that in designing policy administrators fail to take into account facts which are not obvious to those who are necessarily not in immediate contact with the final objects of their policy. It is of course true that, for example, those officials of the Board of Trade or the Ministry of Food whose work it is to design rationing policy, can not be themselves aware of the many individual details which together make up general clothing or food habits. Social research enables this gap to be bridged, for surveys can and have been designed to secure much of this information in such a form that the policies put into operation take these habits into account.

Surveys can not only make clear the existence of such facts, they often put the administrator in a position to assess the relative weights of contrasting facts or attitudes to those facts. For example, whilst many industrial workers might welcome the provision of hot meals in canteens, the quality of the food served would weight the decision to use the canteen much more heavily for some than for others. A policy which took such differences into consideration would assuredly meet with more success than a policy which ignored them.

Again it is sometimes said of administrators that having put a policy into effect they are slow or unwilling to make the adjustments which subsequent experience shows to be necessary. Whilst it is of course true that subsequent experience rarely indicates clearly that one particular adjustment is essential, it is none the less the case that by making use of Social Research the administrator is enabled to watch the effect of his policy in operation and to determine clearly, after some lapse of time, to what extent his policy is attaining its desired effect. The Ministry of Fuel and Power is making such use of the Survey to study the success of its measures to ensure the wisest distribution of domestic stocks of coal, and the Ministry of Food some time ago asked for information about the extent to which extra milk for priority consumers was in fact being used for its designed purpose.

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The general assistance which social research can lend to the administrator may perhaps be summarised by saying that it enables him to take the major relevant social facts into consideration in framing his policy, to measure the extent to which his policy has been successful after it has been put into operation, and to decide what changes, if any, are necessary to ensure its success.

Over and above this general assistance there are special advantages which are possible in certain cases. Thus it frequently happens that the normal method of securing returns from those responsible for carrying out particular policies is circuitous and slow. The use of sampling surveys in such cases may enable those responsible for policy to secure reliable evidence of the results of their policies in a matter of some weeks. Later on in this article a survey is mentioned through which the Ministry of Health was given information about the results of one of its campaigns many months before the official returns were available. Where such sampling surveys show their reliability it is possible that great economies of staff and time may be made. Furthermore, many projects which on account of time and cost are now abandoned, become possible if the relatively economical and speedy sampling method can be used.

Before going on to deal with the methods used in this work and its record during the war, it may be well to deal with an obstacle to the use of Social Research which seems to exist in the minds of many administrators. It is based on doubts as to the public reception of such enquiries. The experience of the War-time Social Survey over the last two years shows that such worries have little basis in fact. Provided the purpose of the enquiry is made clear the overwhelming majority of the public co-operates willingly and, on occasion, with enthusiasm. The records of the Survey show that on an average not more than five persons in every thousand are unwilling to assist its enquiries, and in a recent survey reaching 2,000 farmers in England and Wales only 20 refused to participate.

### RESEARCH METHODS

Departments like the Ministry of Food and the Board of Trade have been assigned functions which involve continual information about some of the everyday activities of the whole population. The Ministry of Agriculture is participating fully in the direction of agriculture. The Ministry of Health is trying to shape health consciousness. All these activities involve a positive role for the departments concerned and correspondingly a need for information upon which to judge the efficacy of policy. The case for a department which specialised in collecting such information, therefore, became obvious and, with the demand so formulated, the solution readily suggested itself.

Commercial organisations, in order to conduct their affairs intelligently when on a national scale, have found it necessary to learn about those habits and opinions of their public which determined the reception of their products. This work, usually called "market" or "consumer" research, has not, so far, been on an extensive scale, because the number of organisations whose interests were big enough to warrant it were limited. Departments of State, however, have the whole population as their field, and the methods adopted by large commercial organisations have relevance for their problems.

The Government interest, however, is rather different from that of commercial organisations which are concerned with particular commodities, and the problems arising out of selling them. The approach of a Government department is much more from the welfare point of view; that is to say, it is more concerned with generalised habits or attitudes, because it is concerned with

administering a policy worked out to meet general problems or general social needs. Therefore, although commercial research suggested part of the method whereby a national picture could be obtained, attention had to be turned elsewhere for the basis from which the problem could be approached. Such a basis was found in sociology, a system of concepts which defines the activities of human beings as members of groups, and attempts to ascertain the inter-relationships of members of groups.

The war had made the need obvious. Commercial organisations and social science had shown the way to tackle the problem. The War-time Social Survey which was established to deal with the problems has drawn from both in developing its technique. From the commercial organisations it has drawn the experience of throwing out a network of investigators over a nation-wide field. From sociology it has drawn the accumulated knowledge of social processes and social psychology, and on this basis developed a method of providing a first-hand account of the habits and attitudes of whole sections of our population.

It is clear that much of the work must at these stages be tentative and experimental, but methods are being refined in two main directions: (a) Developing sampling methods which will give representative facts from those groups of the population in which administrators are interested. The use of adequate sampling methods allows facts or attitudes to be indicated with some precision in a relatively short space of time, and much more economically than with the use of a census. A few examples will bring this point out clearly: When the Ministry of Health commenced its diphtheria immunisation campaign it made provision for official returns of the number of children immunised. Many months had to elapse before statistics from these returns were available. The War-time Social Survey, however, in a few weeks only, was able to indicate with some precision the proportions of children who had been immunised. Similarly, the Survey was able to indicate to the Ministry of Food the proportions of the infant population benefiting from the allocations of orange juice. Again, one of the points in the recent Salvage Campaign was the collection of rubber. The Survey was able to show the Ministry of Supply that domestic rubber waste was not sufficiently plentiful to warrant the expenditure of large sums of money in publicising the need for this kind of salvage.

(b) The second line of development is directed to building up knowledge of those situations from which an accurate record can be made of the particular facts or attitudes being studied. It has been the Survey's experience that no one technique can meet adequately the very different problems which different departments face. Different problems demand different techniques or a combination of techniques for valid results to be forthcoming; for example, when asked to secure information about the diets of school children, the Survey decided after preliminary work that only a complete record of the quantities of food actually eaten during a given period would suffice. On the other hand, on another occasion, it was decided that a request for information about attitudes to housing accommodation could best be met by securing interviews with all the adult members of the household and correlating their answers with such factual information as measured distances to shopping centres, places of work, cinemas, and so on.

The Survey, therefore, does not allow itself to be side-tracked by current discussions on the case for statistical work as against the case for intensive work on smaller groups of the population. Rather does it concentrate upon developing along both lines so that not only is the information dealt with adequately, but also the basis of the information is sufficiently representative to make the inferences drawn from data valid for the whole group which is concerned.



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### THE WORK OF THE SURVEY DURING THE WAR

The surveys carried out so far fall into two main categories. On the one hand the Board of Trade and the Ministry of Food have been provided with information which enabled these Departments to watch the effectiveness of the consumer goods control systems, and on the other hand studies have been made of particular problems which these and the other departments have had to meet in the course of their work. It is convenient to deal with the surveys, completed over a period of two years, under the headings of subject-matter.

The Ministry of Health has devoted much attention in the last few years to what may be called National Health Education. Through widespread campaigns it has tried to raise the general level of understanding of prophylactic measures which, it is hoped, will substantially check such children's diseases as diphtheria and limit the yearly ravages of the common cold and influenza. It has devoted much attention to arousing awareness of venereal diseases. Such campaigns can only be successful if they do not "out-distance public opinion," that is to say, if they take full account of the matters to which people are willing to pay attention, and if they do not cut across practical obstacles which no amount of publicity can remove. The Survey was able to show the Ministry of Health that the popular reception of the V.D. campaign was overwhelmingly successful and was able to check the extent to which the messages had got home. Similarly, whilst showing that there was widespread knowledge of the dangers of diphtheria it was able to indicate the obstacles to action, in the minds of many parents, which would have to be overcome if the target of the campaign was to be achieved. Further studies have been made of the attitude of young women to nursing, and on the use of welfare clinics.

For the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Food many aspects of the food situation have been studied. Amongst these may be mentioned work on the diets of men and women in different occupation groups and school children, from which, with the available information on the total food supplies of the country, a direct picture of the food situation as it affects the individual may be built up. Alongside these factual statements have gone studies of the attitudes to available foodstuffs of various groups of the population, in the light of which the effects of changes in the labour and shipping situation could be met to the greatest general satisfaction. Thus, a few months ago, the Survey were able to provide information showing how necessary concentration of production could be made with much less feeling of loss in some foodstuffs than in others.

The Ministry of Food have made provision for supplements of certain foodstuffs and vitamin preparations to go to special groups of the population. One of the Survey's tasks has been to provide information on the take-up of these supplements and to show, in the case of infants' vitamin supplements, why some mothers were not making use of the preparations to which they were entitled. The far-reaching control of the food situation has involved extensive use of publicity in order to make known necessary measures, and beyond this the Ministry of Food has made strenuous efforts to raise the level of food education so that the fullest use was made of limited food resources. Such measures, as was mentioned in the case of health publicity, need to be based on knowledge of public attitudes and included in the work carried out by the Survey in this respect have been studies of the reception and effect of the Kitchen Front radio programme and the Food Facts notices in the newspapers. Some work for the same department has been done on school and canteen meals.

In this last connection it is worth while noting the part which food policy plays in our general industrial effort, and although few surveys have so far been made directly at the request of the Ministry of Labour most of the food surveys have bearing on the productive effort. This is the case, too, for regular surveys

made for the Ministry of War Transport which aim at recording the facts about "Getting to Work."

Much of the work carried out at the request of the Board of Trade has a similar bearing on the condition of working people. Amongst these studies may be mentioned those concerned with working clothes and the effect of the clothes rationing system. Apart from these studies a regular survey has been made of the supply position from the housewife's viewpoint, of selected commodities known to be in short supply, and some time ago, with a view to legislation, a special study was made of the extent of the credit system in its many forms.

The collection with the Survey's methods, of such information on food consumption and clothing, suggests many possibilities of an indirect approach to the problem of getting sound data on the budgets of various groups. It may also, therefore, be of interest to those departments which are concerned with the different aspects of what, these days, is called social insurance, whilst the methods now used by the Survey may enable it eventually to complete, from the consumers' viewpoint, the retail trade statistics which are now available.

The stimulation of food production in this country has been one of the major events of the war at home. The War-time Social Survey has been able to help the Ministry of Agriculture in two directions. Firstly, by providing information on the results of the "Dig for Victory" campaign, and secondly, by studying the attitudes of farmers to many of the measures which the Ministry of Agriculture has applied.

With most of the departments mentioned the Survey has worked at the request of the administrators concerned. In the case of the work done for the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, the requests have arisen out of the work of committees of scientists studying particular problems in building and house design. This work has been mainly concerned with domestic lighting and heating, but has in addition provided valuable data on domestic fuel consumption: on this problem the Survey is also carrying out regular studies of domestic fuel stocks for the Ministry of Fuel and Power.

#### THE SURVEY IN THE POST-WAR PERIOD

What are the services which the Survey could give, apart from its war-time use? The answer to this question depends upon the duties with which the departments are charged after the war. The studies mentioned above show that over a wide range of problems, both facts and attitudes to these facts can be made readily available in a short space of time. Enough has been said to show that many of the perennial bugbears of the administrator would loom less large if this kind of social research were more widely employed. In particular, it was indicated how in the course of its war-time work the Social Survey provides information which can be of long-term service to those departments whose efficient operations depend upon knowledge of every-day habits. There are at least five main spheres of interest in which this is clearly the case:—

- (a) The Survey's studies of food and clothing habits can prove of immediate assistance to those departments concerned with the problems of social insurance in its many forms. It is worth while mentioning in this connection the official sampling surveys of consumer incomes and expenditure in the United States for which only estimates are now available in this country. It is possible that cost-of-living inquiries may be greatly facilitated by work done in these directions.
- (b) Similarly, the work which the Survey has done in checking the effectiveness of the educational publicity of the Ministry of Health and in exploring resistances to such schemes as child immunisation against

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diphtheria, is a promising aid to prophylactic measures which could do a great deal to raise the general standard of health, whilst the sampling technique makes feasible a continual record of health and disease which is now only possible through the mechanism of compulsory notification.

- (c) In the course of its war-time work, the Survey has had to work out techniques which enable it to secure in a comparatively short time a fairly good picture of the nutritional situation of the nation as a whole, or of particular groups (children, potential mothers, young workers, etc.). If the war-time tendencies in the direction of assuring adequate nutrition of certain "priority" groups are to extend into the post-war period, some such check on the progress made would seem essential.
- (d) One of the national needs on which there is some measure of agreement is the urgency, after the war, for the full use of all our resources. Skilled man-power is, of course, one of our greatest national assets, but very often it is not sufficiently borne in mind that skilled man-power needs a satisfactory setting from which to put out its full effort. During the war, we have learnt the relevance, for full production, of prompt attention to those day-to-day difficulties which can do so much to limit a complete productive effort; earlier on in this article, it was shown how much social research can do to facilitate the removal of such obstacles. Our post-war need for productive efficiency is likely to make such demands on our labour power that the waste which these obstacles entail cannot be permitted.
- (e) There can be very little doubt that the rehousing of a substantial section of the nation will occupy a permanent place in our post-war economy. The part social research can play in bringing the administrator and expert into contact with public needs is well brought out in the following quotation from a radio talk by Professor Carr-Saunders:—

"Take the housing shortage that troubled us so much for the twenty years before the war. We were often told that enough new houses had almost been built, but nevertheless there was still a serious shortage when the war came. In fact we never managed to measure the need for new houses properly. Houses are for families, and we had no information on how many families there were with one child, how many with two, and so on. So we tended to build houses of standard size, too small for many families, and larger than necessary for some."

It is quite evident that many of these errors could have been avoided by social research which would have cost an infinitesimal fraction of the building programme actually carried out. The same remark could be made of the numerous social problems which will confront administrators after the war—problems which will place heavy demands on the intelligence services of the permanent departments. It has been the object of this article to show that much of the burden can be eased by the use of social research, and the methods developed by the War-time Social Survey to meet war-time needs. If, by its work during the war, the Survey has demonstrated to administrators the way in which social research can help them, then it will have made a substantial contribution to administrators' efficiency in meeting the problems of the future.

# The Administration of the Health Services

## "A Medical Officer of Health's View"

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(NOTE.—This paper represents purely the personal viewpoint of the writer. It does not represent, in fact, it may conflict, with the viewpoint of the Council employing him, who have, however, with their usual generosity, given him full permission to speak as the spirit moves him.)

IN the days of chivalry, if the romances of one's youthful reading are credible, it was customary for people in a tight corner to vow, subject to their successful emergence, tribute to the honour of their patron saints. This was probably accompanied also by vows to be a better squire, yeoman, neighbour or father as the case might be. During the last war it was probably a similar re-action, on a mass scale, which in due course led to programmes for improved housing, public health, maternity and child welfare and education. And as the peril during the present war has been still more vividly near our homes and persons, so this strong human impulse to give a thank-offering for personal safety has been still more generally manifested and all kinds of plans for the better ordering of our own and our neighbours' lives have been formulated. I am far from suggesting that planning is solely a re-action to the stimulus of war and personal peril, but it is, I think, the fact that more people are at these times driven down to fundamentals and think harder about what are the things that make life worth while. The important thing is, when easier times come, to put into execution the ideas formulated when thus driven to face up to the more enduring realities.

And here an equally strong human characteristic manifests itself. When a period of long-continued strain and peril is over, relaxation naturally follows, and the vows and plans made in the moments of clear mental illumination become blurred by more selfish personal considerations. The personal sacrifices that change would involve loom unduly large, out of proportion in fact, to those expected of the "other fellow," the difficulties in carrying out the plan seem bigger, the expected benefits, formerly so clear, become hazy, and anyway, the old state of affairs, in the days before the cataclysm, was not so bad after all.

"Indeed, indeed, Repentance oft before

I swore—but was I sober when I swore?"

This, I think, is as true of group or of mass psychology as it is of individual psychology, and as mass reactions tend to be more violent than individual ones, so the phenomenon is the more noticeable in a group. This applies to all groups, whatever be the common bond of interest which turns them into a group. In so far as this country is concerned, the war situation is so much easier and the prospect of victory so much nearer that the stage of re-action shows signs of manifesting itself. This paper must to some extent be concerned with the tendency to such a re-action which is showing itself in the medical profession and which may in the near future become obvious in other groups, such as local authorities and voluntary hospitals who play a big part in, and bear a heavy responsibility for, the health services.

## THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE HEALTH SERVICES

Medical planning is not new. The British Medical Association published in 1930 and republished in 1938 proposals for a General Medical Service for the nation. An important report on the Scottish Health Services appeared in 1936. The P.E.P. Report on the British Health Services, a veritable *magnum opus*, was issued in 1937. Reports on Tuberculosis in Wales and on Tyneside Local Government covered similar ground from more localised angles. Since the beginning of the war there have been the interim report of Medical Planning Commission of the B.M.A., the Beveridge Report with, for our purpose, its famous Assumption B, and a host of other papers and documents. The Government, in the House of Commons debate on the Beveridge Report in February, 1943, gave a definite undertaking through Sir John Anderson and Mr. Herbert Morrison to introduce a comprehensive medical service to cover all forms of treatment and extend throughout the community, providing free benefit, no means test, medical reorganisation, free hospital treatment, and so on.<sup>1</sup> The Minister of Health has since then been engaged on confidential discussions with all the interests affected, and in the near future a White Paper, embodying the Government's proposals, is promised.

### THE PRESENT SYSTEM

To put this complex problem into some sort of perspective, some review, inadequate though the limitations of a paper must make it, of its major components must be undertaken. Whatever form the provision of medical service may take, it will primarily be in the hands of the registered medical practitioner, of whom there are over 50,000 in the country. Following matriculation, the medical student spends a minimum of six years in acquiring a corpus of knowledge which is probably wider and larger than that needed to secure entry into any other profession. Its successful acquisition may not need intellectual brilliance, but it does require intense and prolonged application and certain gifts of character. Having passed a recognised qualifying examination and entered his name on the register of the General Medical Council he is at liberty to practise his profession. Following a short period as house surgeon, house physician, etc., the majority enter general practice. Just how many do so it is difficult to say, but there are some 20,000 responsible for the National Health Insurance care of 20,000,000 patients. About half are seen every year by their doctors, the total of visits exceeding fifty million. The remaining doctors enter whole-time hospital service, the public health service, do whole-time research or become consultants and specialists in many widely varying fields of which the physician, surgeon, gynaecologist, radiologist and psychiatrist are perhaps the best known to the public. Here then is the medical practitioner who is, and must always be, the keystone in any system of medicine. We shall come back later to some of the orientational difficulties which the new health service proposals are causing him, remarking only at this stage, that his income is derived from panel fees, sick club fees, part-time appointments, and private patients, that his expenses are heavy and his responsibilities arduous.

For the average private citizen the next most important part of the medical edifice is the hospital, which may be either voluntary or municipal. The municipal hospitals are the direct descendants of the poor law hospitals and institutions, managed by the former poor law guardians. Their appropriation as public health hospitals was encouraged by the Local Government Act of 1929, but there are still some hundreds of institutions for the infirm and chronic sick under the care of social welfare or public assistance departments.

The staffing of the voluntary and municipal hospitals is not on the same basis. In the voluntary, except for resident juniors, the medical staff are unpaid. In the municipal there is a paid hierarchy under the medical superintendent with consultants on a part-time, paid, basis. In the municipal hospital, medical matters



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come, through the medical superintendent and the medical officer of health, under the final control of a lay committee, in the voluntary they are decided by a medical committee composed of the honorary consultants of the hospital. This difference, which is certainly true of the large teaching hospitals, is easily explicable on historical grounds, and is probably capable of easy solution in an integrated service, but has nevertheless given rise to serious misgivings among medical men in discussions on the national medical service and its control.

The following table, based on Stone,<sup>2</sup> indicates the extent of hospital provision in England and Wales:—

## HOSPITAL ACCOMMODATION

Municipal			Voluntary		
	No. of hospitals	No. of beds		No. of hospitals	No. of beds
(a) Public Health—			(a) General—		
General ... ..	69	36,059	100 or more beds ...	163	33,916
Children ... ..	11	4,521	30—99 ... ..	217	11,093
Homes and Hospitals for children under 5 years ... ..	22	426	Under 30 ... ..	283	4,664
Maternity Homes and Hospitals ... ..	94	1,449	(b) Special—		
Sanatoria and Tuberculosis Hospitals ...	130	14,674	Children ... ..	45	3,787
(b) Public Assistance—			Women's (including maternity) ... ..	42	2,763
General Hospitals ...	33	17,820	Eye, ear, nose and throat ... ..	37	1,660
Children's Hospitals ...	2	275	Sanatoria and Tuberculosis Hospitals—		
Institutions (infirm, sick and mental) ...	497	68,270	(a) <i>Ad hoc</i> ... ..	79	6,734
			(b) Mixed ... ..	56	2,258
			Other Hospitals ...	66	5,081
	858	143,494		988	71,956

One general difference between local authority and voluntary hospitals is worth noting. The former must provide accommodation for all patients seeking admission, whilst the latter can exercise some discretion and often in fact transfer patients to the former after a few days' treatment.

Whilst it is a matter of opinion as to whether the small voluntary hospitals of the cottage hospital type do not give delusory promise of full medical efficiency, it is in general true that, despite the progress since 1929, the voluntary hospital is more efficient than the municipal hospital. This again is largely accounted for by the historical growth of the two types of institution. The former was an *ad hoc* institution for the relief of sickness and the teaching of medicine, making its own appeal for funds, and concentrating largely on short-stay patients with acute disabilities. The latter was for the relief of the sick poor in whom the old, the infirm, and the chronic sick predominated. Its budget was conditioned by the circumstances which led to its establishment, and was and is only one of the items financed out of rates. Equality of facilities and of standards of treatment in the two types was gradually approaching, and if Mr. Morrison's words on free treatment, summarised earlier, are duly implemented, will be expedited in the future.

There remain the special hospitals: children, maternity, ear, nose and throat, ophthalmic, gynaecological, infectious disease, mental, etc., and the convalescent homes. There seem to be many advantages and few, if any, disadvantages in fitting these into a unified national medical service scheme. Nor must it be forgotten that whilst medical staffs are in the nature of things the most important in this connection, nursing and ancillary staffs connected with radiology, massage, pharmacy and dietetics, engineering staffs, stewards, clerks

## THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE HEALTH SERVICES

and domestics are just as essential. To the work of nursing staffs, as to the medical, there is a domiciliary as well as an institutional side.

The only further comment needed is that in the present stage of civilised organisation it is completely irrational that there should be two separate and independent types of general hospitals designed for the investigation and treatment of serious or obscure illness.

In addition to domiciliary and hospital medical services social needs have led to the institution by local authorities of many personal health services of which from the present viewpoint the most important are the school medical and maternity and child welfare services. These again embrace domiciliary and institutional activities, and the problem of their integration in a national service must be faced.

This will not be easy. The local authorities in England and Wales include 62 county councils, 83 county borough councils, 309 non-county borough councils, 29 metropolitan borough councils, 572 urban districts and 475 rural districts. The populations (1931 census; places and populations given in these extremes have in some cases since altered, but more up-to-date figures would still reveal the same wide variety in each category of each local authority) of the counties range from 4,400,000 (London) to 17,400 (Rutland), of the county boroughs from 1,000,000 (Birmingham) to 24,500 (Canterbury), of the municipal boroughs from 133,000 (Walthamstow) to 1,400 (Lostwithiel) and of the urban districts from 185,000 (Willesden) to 250 (Kirklington, N. Riding). Three hundred and fifteen of them are education authorities with responsibilities for the school medical services and 363 are welfare authorities, including 153 non-county boroughs, 51 urban districts, 3 rural districts and the 29 metropolitan boroughs. There are nearly 3,400 Welfare Centres in the country, of which 2,550 are provided by the local authorities. About 70 per cent. of all children born attend during their first year of life, as do more than 60 per cent. of expectant mothers. Health visitors visit in their homes more than 95 per cent. of the children born and a very high percentage of the expectant mothers. It is not possible to assess in mathematical terms the benefit to the public health thus produced, but it is very substantial. It is worth noting while considering these services that the White Paper on the Educational Services propose to reduce the number of education authorities to 145, *i.e.*, Counties and County Boroughs only.

### THE PRESENT INFLUENCE OF THE MEDICAL PROFESSION

At this point one may perhaps express some surprise at the comparatively unimportant influence which medicine exercises in the national sphere. The churches have their Archbishops and the law the Lord Chief Justice and Lord Chancellor. The defence services have their First Sea Lords and Chiefs of Staff, utterances from whom, either in the inner Council Chambers of the nation or in public, carry great weight. Medicine is a profession of at least equal fundamental importance; he is a fortunate individual indeed who, at some time in his life has not to put blind and implicit confidence in his doctor's professional wisdom to keep him alive, and yet, on the national stage, medicine is but little regarded. He would be an unusual enthusiast who at present held that the same weight attached to the utterances of the leaders of the medical profession—the Chief Medical Officer or the Presidents of the Royal Colleges—as does to those of the personages I have named. The reason may be the unique *personal* character of the service which medicine gives to the community. That service, however, leads to the accumulation of much wisdom in those who give it faithfully and it might be worth examining whether proper use is made of it on a national scale. Certainly, in a reformed and comprehensive health service, the counsels of the heads of that service ought to carry not less national weight in their own sphere than do those of the heads of the other professions.

## DEFICIENCIES IN THE PRESENT SYSTEM

Here, then, are the major component parts in the existing health service. General practitioners, working mainly as isolated units, and responsible for domiciliary services, both private and panel, voluntary hospitals and local authority hospitals, both general and public assistance, midwifery, maternity and child welfare, school medical, venereal disease and tuberculosis services are the main links in the chain.

From the point of view of the private practitioner the deficiencies in the present system cannot be better summed up than in paragraphs 17-20 of the draft interim report of the Medical Planning Commission:—

“ 17. The general public finds many grounds for criticism in the provision and distribution of medical services. The benefits of National Health Insurance are restricted to wage earners, though the needs of the dependants of insured persons and other persons of similar economic status are no less. The benefits of this scheme are also severely limited in that they do not include as statutory benefits consultant, specialist and institutional services. Another complaint is that economic status rather than medical need is felt to be too often the criterion of eligibility for medical service. The distribution of doctors, both general practitioners and specialists, is said to be governed more by the economics of the medical profession than by the medical needs of the various types of area. Consultant and specialist services are not always conveniently available, partly because practitioners engaged in them tend to concentrate in university centres and the large towns. The absence of co-ordination in medical services is a general ground of criticism by the public. The patient who requires treatment that cannot be given by his own doctor expects that his doctor should be able to secure that service for him. In fact, the general practitioner is not always provided with the means of securing for his patients all the treatment they may require.

18. The sense of isolation is one of the chief grievances of the general practitioner. Many statutory authorities charged with personal health functions well within the scope of the general practitioner have preferred to exclude him from their organisation. Hospital authorities, both statutory and voluntary, have often failed to foster his goodwill and to create the machinery necessary for full co-operation and consultation with him. In some directions his sphere of professional activity has been limited to such an extent as to endanger his general efficiency. Though verbal tribute is often paid to the important place of the general practitioner in the pattern of the country's health services, in practice statutory bodies do not generally admit him to partnership with them, and even tend to widen the gap between official medical services and general practice.

19. There is another form of isolation which the general practitioner experiences. The days when a doctor armed only with his stethoscope and his drugs could offer a fairly complete medical service are gone. He cannot now be all-sufficient. For efficient work he must have at his disposal modern facilities for diagnosis and treatment, and often these cannot be provided by a private individual or installed in a private surgery. He must also have easy and convenient access to consultant and specialist opinion, whether at hospital or elsewhere, and he must have opportunities of real collaboration with consultants. Facilities such as these are inadequate at the present time. There must also be close collaboration amongst local general practitioners themselves, for their different interests and experience can be of

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value to each other. Although this need is recognised by practitioners collaboration has not been developed as it should be.

20. Other criticisms offered by general practitioners relate to the conditions in which they work. There are insufficient facilities for regular post-graduate study and the development of special scientific and clinical interest. The pressure of work, which may be ascribed in part to bad distribution, often leads to excessive hours of duty and insufficient holidays. Some criticisms of the present system concern finance. A considerable capital outlay is required before a doctor can establish himself in general practice. Those who have to borrow the whole or a large part of the necessary money find the strain very great, and the proportion of practitioners who carry a heavy financial burden in their early years is growing. Various arrangements have been made by insurance companies and others to aid practitioners, but some of them have financially crippled the borrower. The absence of any compulsory or universal financial provisions for retirement and pensions is the subject of complaint. Although such arrangements can be made privately by any practitioner who desires them and can afford them, it is felt that there should be some organised scheme which would give the general practitioner advantages in this respect similar to those enjoyed by practitioners in the public services."

One other authoritative comment must be quoted. The Beveridge Report (para. 3) states: "In one respect only of the first importance, namely, limitation of medical service, both in the range of treatment which is provided as of right and in respect of the classes of persons for whom it is provided, does Britain's achievement fall seriously short of what has been accomplished elsewhere." In paragraphs 426-437 the Report discusses the implications of the Comprehensive Health and Rehabilitation Services, in so far only as they affect Social Security. The provisional weekly contribution rates include a sum, varying according to age and sex, from 6d. to 10d. weekly to meet part, and part only, of the total cost of the health services. Sir William states in paragraph 437: "From the standpoint of social security a health service providing full preventive and curative treatment of every kind to every citizen without exceptions, without remuneration limit and without an economic barrier at any point to delay recourse to it, is the ideal plan. . . . The primary interest of the Ministry of Social Security is not in the details of the national health service or in its financial arrangements. It is in finding a health service which will diminish disease by prevention and cure, and will ensure the careful certification needed to control payment of benefit at the rates proposed."

### SUGGESTED REFORMS

We may now consider some of the reforms which have been suggested. So far as I am aware the *status quo ante bellum* in medicine is without a defendant. Literally everybody wants some kind of alteration.

The medical profession have been given some indication of what is in the Government mind as regards general practice by the Deputy Secretary of the British Medical Association.<sup>3</sup> This includes group practice from health centres, in the main on a salaried basis, either whole- or part-time for those now in practice and whole-time only for future entrants, with compensation for loss of the capital value of existing practices. Consultants would be based on hospitals, whole-time or part-time according to circumstances and appointed by the local authority.

What type of local authority is meant is not yet specified, but the same authority will presumably be responsible ultimately for the general practitioner

service and for the hospital services. Nor is there, as yet, any clear definition of the future relationship between voluntary hospitals and local authority hospitals, with the exception of an indication that the voluntary hospitals are to continue.

Integration of hospital services has already made some progress. The 1929 Local Government Act provides that local authorities, when considering their own hospital services, shall consult with representatives of local voluntary hospitals. Amongst the voluntary hospitals themselves the British Hospitals Association represents nearly all, and has established regional committees in the 23 regions into which the country is divided for this purpose. More recently, the Nuffield Provincial Hospitals Trust has aimed at "stimulating the formation of Regional Hospitals' Councils formed of representatives of voluntary hospitals, doctors and local authorities. Advice is given on the grouping of hospitals, avoidance of wasteful competition, the making of staff appointments, etc., and there are funds for supplying monetary grants."<sup>4</sup> The principle of the regional organisation of hospitals, whether voluntary or local authority, seems therefore well recognised and on the way to establishment, but they (the hospitals) represent only one aspect of the larger problem of integrating into one organic whole all the health services.

A special *Lancet* article,<sup>5</sup> unsigned and possibly carrying some official inspiration, deals with this under the sub-title of "Health Provinces." Thinking on a functional basis, the article points out, the ideal unit of health administration is much larger than a county borough or county, and is in fact large enough to support a 98 per cent. complete medical service (the remaining 2 per cent. concerned with such specialities as cerebral surgery and the treatment of post-encephalitis can best be dealt with on a national basis), yet compact enough to have easy lines of communication with the centre, both for the convenience of patients and relatives and consultants. England and Wales divides itself naturally into thirty such regions with populations (excluding London) of  $\frac{1}{3}$  to 2 millions. They might be administered by *ad hoc* Provincial Health Councils made up of representatives of the local authorities, the voluntary hospitals, the doctors and other health workers, the universities, and by no means least, the public. These Councils would come under such national supervision as was needed either by the grant-giving Ministry of Health or by a National Health Council. Each council would need a strong administrative staff, field investigators and inspectors, and a public relations department. These Provincial Health Councils would have to be statutory, would be large enough to permit proper planning yet small enough to preserve individuality, would preserve democratic control, and might (in my view, should) have medical and other advisory committees, with power to investigate and publish reports. They could be financed by direct Treasury grant according to the actual needs of the province, and would in their turn make payments to voluntary and municipal hospitals and would set up, own, and operate local health centres as well as any new hospitals needed. In so far as general practice is concerned it can, in urban areas, be most efficiently carried out from health centres where eight or ten doctors work together, with the chance to develop and pool special skills, with assistance in form-filling and clerical work, with a common clinical laboratory and a theatre for minor surgery. Off-duty times, holidays and study-leave become easier, and the doctor would then only require, and must have, freedom to call his professional work his own. For his patients' sake he must be his own master, free from supervision of his professional work and with direct access to the central staff of the health council. Remuneration would remain a vexed question, but if health centre-practice is to be free from undue competition for patients it would clearly be better on a salary basis than on a salary plus capitation basis. This would also minimise the strain which the realisation of the Beveridge proposals will place on the



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certifying capacities of doctors and the honesty of patients, by freeing the doctor from the fear of loss of capitation fees. Appointments should be publicly advertised and the final selection board should include the health centre practitioners, representatives of the provincial health council and an outside medical assessor. As the Government's plans include domiciliary and hospital specialist treatment, the majority of specialists would be whole-time and salaried. The medical officer of health would still need to advise his local council, but as he would need to organise the prophylactic health services—the maternity and child welfare and school medical services, diphtheria immunisation, etc., through the local health centre, it would be best for his administrative loyalties to be the same as those of his clinical colleagues. Finally, a supra-provincial health council, representing all health interests, should give grants to medical schools, promote medical teaching, finance medical research and give grants to the national specialist hospitals.

The more the proposals contained in this *Lancet* article are studied, the more weighty they become. I have no knowledge of the contents of the White Paper, and while the details may differ widely from those outlined it is difficult to conceive a satisfactory scheme for a comprehensive health service based on any other principles. Within a uniform framework they allow ample scope for adaptation in detail to local circumstances—more than any proposals yet known to me they give the “airy nothing” of vague plans and aspirations “a local habitation and a name.”

At first glance they have the great drawback of upsetting all existing machinery, be it general practitioner, insurance committee, specialist, local authority or voluntary hospital. They may, therefore, at least be given the credit of sincerity and of avoiding the deliberate placation of any of the powerful existing interests which political manoeuvres so often involve and which a short-sighted policy of mere expediency might dictate. A further glance at some of the implications of the article is essential.

### COMMENTS ON THE SUGGESTED REFORMS

So far as the general practitioner is concerned health centre practice and a salaried service is suggested. As I have already said, medical practice is almost unique among the professions in that it deals and must deal with the individual. A teacher deals with a group, the law usually with the individual in relation to one or more other individuals, the Church with all humanity, but sick mankind can only be dealt with as individual units. So far, that human care has normally been supplied by one individual doctor who, when he judged the need to arise, called in one or more kinds of quite unrelated assistance. The new proposals still leave the individual doctor with the primary responsibility, but will enable him to work in close co-operation with colleagues of the same kind and same grade and to call in as required facilities, human and technical, to any extent the needs of the patient demand, all part of the same service and all working to the one end, namely, the speedy restoration and preservation of the patient's health. Instead of competition for patients and for private or capitation fees, he can devote his energies to friendly rivalry with his colleagues in doing the best professional job of work.

The representatives of the general practitioner have been very vocal that the competition for patients (and therefore for fees) promotes good work, and is in the patients' interest. Within limits there is something in the argument—human nature will always tend to value something so tangible as the immediate monetary reward of effort—but this form of success is not necessarily related to pure professional skill, and if unregulated, the more it succeeds the more it defeats itself, by leading to overwork and inability to devote the requisite amount

of time to each individual patient. Practically every doctor of course does a good deal of unpaid work from a sheer sense of duty, and a salaried service (provided the salary is adequate) would leave freedom for full concentration on patients needing service. The argument that salaried men would tend to degenerate into time-servers does not impress me. Medicine is an exacting profession, and the man showing a tendency to slack could probably be safely left to the tender mercies of his health centre colleagues—and his patients.

The unique personal nature of the relationship between doctor and patient requires as its fundamental basis complete mutual confidence and trust. Every patient must know as a matter of absolute right that whatever condition necessitates the services of his doctor shall be confidential between him and the doctor, and such assistants as the doctor needs for the proper carrying out of his work. No one else, whatever his position in national or local life, whether representative or personal, has a right to personal details about any patient as a matter of routine. Machinery there must be, of course, for the investigation of complaints which have a *prima facie* basis of justification. Similar machinery now exists as part of the administration of national health insurance, and is as much in the interests of the doctor as of the patient. Similarly, as at present, the administration of justice may make occasional demands on the doctor for information which he has obtained in the course of his professional duties. Beyond these two cases I can think of no circumstance in which the rule of professional secrecy should not be absolute. With large *ad hoc* authorities, concerned with the provision of full facilities for a comprehensive health service I can see no danger that the medical profession's fears of interference with the doctor-patient relationship will ever have any justification in fact. That confidence is strengthened by the fully declared intention of the Government to make the service comprehensive. If it applies to the legislators, national and local, if the administrative staffs framing technical details are themselves in due course to utilise this service, if, as is the fact, everyone at some time in his life needs medical attention, it is surely fantastic to suspect the Government, even by inadvertence, of formulating a type of service which will interfere with the doctor-patient relationship. If that result appears even a remote possibility the doctors can safely leave the patients to become for this purpose their own doctors and apply a specific remedy.

On the other hand, every health authority will require full morbidity statistics. To take hypothetical instances, it may be of considerable importance to be aware of the relative incidence of chronic rheumatism in Liverpool and Hull or of dyspepsia in drivers of vehicles driven by internal combustion engines as compared with drivers of steam engines. Social medicine cannot progress without full access to facts such as these, presented completely impersonally. Very much more is known about mortality than about morbidity, and the aim of a health service is vigorous life rather than scientific death. Field research, as compared with laboratory research, is largely virgin soil, fertile with opportunity which should not be neglected.

A national health service should also give the practitioner some opportunity to explore the value of routine medical examination. The health service is no sovereign prescription for the sudden abolition of sickness, and clinical duties will probably continue to be the major task of the health centre practitioner, but routine examinations will give a chance to observe early departures from the normal, to correct errors in the patient's way of life and to do some health education. Our knowledge of human biology is not so extensive as to justify neglect of this opportunity.

The carrying out of such a scheme as that formulated in the *Lancet* article will have a profound effect on the health functions of existing local authorities.

## THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE HEALTH SERVICES

I may perhaps be allowed the personal comment that I regard maternity and child welfare, school medicine and housing as the three most productive and constructive health services undertaken by local authorities. The re-action to the suggestion that the first two of these should be merged into the comprehensive health service administered by a separate *ad hoc* authority, is bound to be strong and intense. The services are almost entirely a local authority and central government creation. The infant mortality rate, the diminution in recent years of the maternal mortality rate and the increase in height, weight and vigour of school children, as well as a change in the kind of minor ailments from which they suffer are in large measure an indication of the success attending the efforts of those responsible for these services. To many medical officers of health they have been labours of love and not simply part of their official duties. Both authorities and officers will cry instinctively that what they have done so well, what was in fact never done before and is a creation of their minds and hearts and hands, cannot now be taken from them, and that if it is, the work will suffer, that thirty large *ad hoc* authorities cannot do with equal care and attention to detail what a hundred and sixty-three smaller authorities now take a pride in. Transfer of medical officers engaged in school medicine and maternity and child welfare, of school nurses and health visitors and midwives may be involved—no precise details are yet available. If they are, I cannot escape the conclusion that they must be accepted. They represent, on the part of local authorities, as big a sacrifice as the general practitioner will be asked to make in accepting a salaried service, and should as a result engender some mutual sympathy and understanding on both sides. The justification is, of course, the aim in view. If a comprehensive health service, "directed towards the achievement of positive health, of the prevention of disease, and the relief of sickness," is to come into being, that service must be integrated in all its branches, looking in each region to the same co-ordinating and directing authority, and with its personnel able to feel themselves members of one service. Any other way will lead to a clashing of loyalties and a conflict of interests.

Towns in plenty like Liverpool, Leeds and Birmingham are of course quite capable of being self-sufficient and of running a first-class service. The days of self-sufficiency whether in parochial, urban or national affairs are, however, over. The urban and rural neighbours of these great communities are not capable of it, but ought not, for that reason, to be required to forego the benefits of a comprehensive medical service. The attempt to solve the problem by absorption of the smaller into the larger authority is not applicable all over the country, and would in any case, at this stage, create more difficulties than it would solve. The uniform application of the principle of the *ad hoc* authority or Joint Board seems the only feasible solution.

Local authorities and voluntary hospital committees will still presumably retain responsibility for their own hospitals, but will co-operate in the carrying out of the policy of the Provincial Health Council so far as it affects their institutions.

The place of the specialist and consultant in the comprehensive service is more nebulous. For the scheme to be comprehensive he must of course be in it, but his exact place must await the White Paper.

Nor is the full tale of those whose work will be affected yet complete. Town clerks, borough treasurers and borough engineers and a host of clerical officers, as well as medical officers of health, all play an essential part in the existing health services of local government. Proposals as radical as those which have formed the main theme of this paper are bound to produce an immediate adverse re-action. Only the impossibility of securing the goal to be aimed at in any other way could in fact justify them. That goal was admirably defined by the

Minister of Health in a speech at Watford on 26th March last: "The Government has in fact charged us, in consultation with all those who will be playing a part in the service, with framing plans for a social reform whose scope and importance it is scarcely possible to exaggerate. It is a reform which will touch the life of almost every member of the community, and which can eventually contribute more to human welfare and human happiness, and to the strength of the British nation, than any of the historic social advances of the past century."<sup>6</sup>

That is the height of the argument. An absence of knowledge of the content of the consultations which Mr. Brown mentions and a proper humility in the face of great events make it necessary for the writer to add that the White Paper may contain proposals widely different from those discussed here. If he has directed attention to some of the more important facets of this many-sided problem and indicated some of the principles which must be applied in its solution, his purpose will be fully satisfied. The proposals will affect "almost every member of the community" and will deserve the widest publicity and the consideration of every individual citizen. By all means let us have, in the Press and on the broadcast, not only the most detailed description but debates representing the widest possible viewpoint.

Life for some years has been "a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury." A comprehensive health service may help to bring some meaning into the tale and amplify and indeed quicken the hidden harmonies underlying "the still sad music of humanity." Those who have been privileged to witness at first hand the quality of the average citizen as exemplified during the 'blitz' will not doubt that the attempt is worth making.

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- <sup>1</sup> *Lancet* (1943) I, p. 373.
- <sup>2</sup> Stone, *Hospital Organisation and Management*, 3rd edition, pp. 12-13.
- <sup>3</sup> Supplement to *British Medical Journal*, 22nd May, 1943, p. 61.
- <sup>4</sup> Sir Arthur MacNalty, *The Reform of the Public Health Services*, p. 43. Oxford University Press.
- <sup>5</sup> *Lancet* (1943) I, p. 813.
- <sup>6</sup> *Medical Officer*, 10th April, 1943, p. 116.

## Organisation and Methods: Ground Floor Problems

By E. N. GLADDEN, Ph.D. (London)

### I.—ORGANISATION

THE recent report of the Select Committee on National Expenditure<sup>1</sup> has opened up a wide field for investigation and discussion. Yet one of its chief and certainly most useful proposals, viz., that the status of organisation and methods branches in the Service should be raised considerably to enable them to cultivate and advise the higher ranges,<sup>2</sup> may well lead us to overlook the complexity of the more bread-and-butter aspects of the problem. It is the easiest thing in the world to appoint experts, and not difficult to build up an

organisation competent to deal with the higher staffs, but we should take care not to miss the point that if it were not for the growing complexity of the subordinate ranges the need for such an organisation could hardly arise, since it is still possible for the competent administrator to keep reasonably close contact with the directive elements. It may not, therefore, be altogether wrong to suggest that within the limits of their restricted field the first organisation and methods experts were right to cultivate the wider environments. This does not mean that they had got far on the road mapped out, but that in the main they were adopting the right sailing directions. An increase in scope and status would naturally broaden their field of operations to bring in the higher ranges, but the problem would still be at its extensive rather than its intensive stage.

If we accept the analogy that the Administrative Class is the thinking element, the brain of the administrative organisation, we must not forget that a brain is useless without eyes and ears and hands. In the Service, therefore, the extremities through which contact is made with the extra-administrative world—that field for whose interest it exists—are the so-called subordinate classes in their modern multiformity. This analogy is, of course, a poor one. Indeed, all physical analogies, as applied to social structures, are suspect, but this one serves to give a useful general picture. In truth, in all human organisations the thought process is carried out at all levels and within his own field it should be the aim of the administrator to increase this diffusion. Between the administrative brain and the administrative extremities the connecting link is the organisational pattern of the administration, usually built up on a simple hierarchic plan. Instructions percolate from the top; action takes place at the extremities and information flows back from the field, to enable an assessment of past results and a re-assessment of future activities. In a perfect world this would be enough: fortunately we do not live in a perfect world. And so we now learn that we need organisation and methods officers to see that the machine works properly. Their proper function is to act as administrative research workers and to advise all ranks of the results of their investigations so that they may know how to improve their effectiveness. They should not issue instructions; that is a function still reserved to those who are responsible for the results achieved.

On the general question of Civil Service organisation there is not space to say much here. The most efficient form of organisation is necessarily hierarchic, tempered where necessary by functional or departmental divisions. In the Service the most efficient division of labour has peculiarly postulated separate operative classes, each with its own hierarchy and working to a certain extent in parallel. The system works well up to a point but, while in the long run the administrative class must claim priority as the Services' directorate, the question often arises at the intermediate levels, Who is to decide? This is the burden of the specialists' case against the administrator. He claims the right to advise directly those whose function it is to decide. This is one of the many fields for investigation, for there can be little doubt that the experts' plaint is often soundly based. War-time experience, for example, in the wide employment by certain departments of production and of labour supply officers suggests that there must be a high degree of flexibility in these cross contacts. Dignity will not act as a substitute for competence, neither will a strict insistence upon the hierarchic pattern encourage spot decisions when the developing situation calls for urgency.

In a well-organised administrative service the problem of delegation of responsibility solves itself in efficient practice. With a multiplicity of grade levels it is never possible precisely to define who should do what. The efficient officer will know what control to exercise himself and what to delegate to a



more subordinate supervisor. His worst dilemma will be when he finds himself giving too much time to detail because he cannot have complete confidence in those below him. This, by the way, is a compelling reason for care in making promotions. Administrative passengers are carried both from above and from below, and favouritism is a poison that does not end in its effects upon those who are immediately deprived of their rightful opportunity to contribute to the general good.

In connection with this problem of division of responsibility, the distribution of in-coming mail—apparently a simple matter—is one of great importance. It is necessary that official correspondence shall flow in at the right level and not need to pass through too many hands. The chief should never miss seeing what is vital nor be bothered with too much that is below his level, and so all the way down the line. In a simple organisation it is easy for all of it to flow in at the top or at the bottom, but this will not do in a field of wider complexity, nor is the careful regulation of the German Civil Service<sup>3</sup> desirable. We need flexibility and we may say that we have it, though whether in the right proportions it remains for the new organisation and methods experts to discover.

It is interesting to consider how this hierarchic method, which is second nature to the civil servant in light of his upbringing, is often difficult to the outsider, especially if he has been the director of a small concern in private life. In fact many can never get clear of the efficiency methods of the small organisation which become "inefficiency" methods when applied to the Government service. We hear much about the intricacies of red tape, but war-time experience has demonstrated to many of us that the boot is not always on the same foot. It is not unusual to find war-time civil servants dealing with a block of work personally and as a whole, without any delegation except in the use of a typist. And I am not sure that you can make any better of this in war-time, unless you can train your individualists to be good civil servants. They will not believe that it is their method and not yours that is uneconomic.

But let us leave the general problem of organisation and touch some of the other efficiency problems, albeit somewhat more briefly.

## II.—THE PASSING DOWN OF INSTRUCTIONS

In a small organisation orders can be transmitted verbally and the individualist employer invariably scoffs at printed instructions, which are to him the very essence of red-tape methods. But as soon as division of responsibility occurs the problem of obtaining consistency in the issue of orders arises; general rules need to be formulated, and this naturally means that they are written down for future guidance. The process steadily develops. Much will depend upon the nature of the department's functions; some ministries need more instructions than others, but a widely organised department with headquarters, district and local offices functioning to provide services to a wide sector of the community will not be able to avoid the building up of a complex instructional system. Equivalence of operation as between post offices, tax offices or employment exchanges cannot possibly be attained without such a system. A different type of instruction is that conveying information of a technical nature, such as the sort for which the Post Office Engineering Department has built up a very comprehensive and efficient instructional service on the loose-leaf principle.

In times of comparative stability it will be easy to cope with the outflow of instructions. Time is not often the chief factor, and it has even been possible in at least one department for instructions to be passed for the prior criticism

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of the Staff Side of the Whitley Council.<sup>4</sup> But in time of crisis or rapid change—of mobilisation or of demobilisation—it is another story: there must be no delay. Changes are consequently so rapid that many instructions are already out-of-date almost before they are issued. The thinking officer will even marvel at his own ability to withstand the flood and still get on with the job. It is a dilemma of balance. Without instructions the official cannot proceed far and avoid breakdown or hope to achieve that equality of treatment which is an essential of the official sphere; with too many instructions the official will soon find himself sloughing through a bog of official inconsistency, and if he saves himself when he is merely up to his neck he will be lucky.

The problem can be solved if the outflow is ruled by necessity alone and if the instructions are so carefully planned that not more than necessary are allowed to flow down to the people who have the work to perform. This in any case will mean that the junior supervisor will invent methods of passing on, verbally or in written form, only those parts of instructions that are of interest to the particular officer. He may perhaps dissect and make a précis of the instruction in the light of the particular aspect of the work being performed locally and at the particular level; he may, in order to ensure responsibility, obtain the initials in acknowledgment of each member of the staff in confirmation that the instruction has been read at least once; he may even, where the situation merits, hold a brief general discussion of the changes; he will in any case hold himself open always to enquiry from his staff on the meaning of the particular order. Only by the pooling of knowledge on the fringes of actual practice can the correct purpose of the instructional system be achieved. At the top there must be a continual process of revision of what has gone before and a cutting away of dead wood. Here at the very outset is a very pretty problem for the "O and M" man, for there is surely much to be gained by an actual comparison of the methods at present being worked out in the various ministries. Each will imagine that there is little to be learned from the other and be amazed that, in fact, there is so great a variety of experience readily at hand.

### III.—JOB ANALYSIS

It is not always easy to determine in a large and varied organisation just what are the actual functions and daily performance of each individual officer. Yet something more than a rough-and-ready assessment is required if both individual and general standards of efficiency are to be correctly weighed. The higher or supervisory officer must always be on his guard against the adept in window dressing, the man who is always busy and never wrong. On a short-term basis many are expert at creating this impression. They are usually secretive and carry much in their heads, consequently they do not fit well into a team. When they are absent they like to think that their absence is felt. They do not realise that the best test of efficiency is that the system works smoothly whether or not a particular individual is present. There are still too many higher officers who are taken in by this "salesmanship"; otherwise it would die out, for in all fields supply and demand equate themselves. Here is a problem for the efficiency expert, who needs therefore also to be a psychologist.

It is desirable that the various jobs should be laid out according to general instructions and the local plan out should be shown in clearly defined staff charts, which should be available for general inspection. This will not only add a businesslike touch to the office organisation but also render the periodical job of replanning easier of approach. Every act of forward planning is greatly facilitated by the fact of knowing precisely just where we are starting from.

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Moreover, anything that helps to weaken the normal inertias against review is desirable irrespective of its other merits, although we must not go to the other extreme of so carefully defining everything that the machinery loses all responsiveness. Here, as elsewhere, it is broadly a question of balance between organisation and fluidity.<sup>5</sup>

While on this topic reference should be made to a procedure that has been found useful in certain branches (especially where the different duties show a wide variation), viz., the job description. Such descriptions are best prepared by the man on the actual work. He lists the various duties performed, describing the operations in simple language and giving a time-table where appropriate. References are made to relative instructions which, it is made quite clear, it is not the function of such descriptions to replace. Such descriptions are for guidance only. They should be periodically revised and made available for outside inspection under the authority of the officer in immediate control of the work. They can be of particular use to training officers and will often be of considerable value when, owing possibly to illness, unexpected absence makes it necessary for an officer, who may perhaps have a good general knowledge but little detailed information on the absentee's duties, to tackle the job at a moment's notice. They have the further virtue of ensuring that the people concerned give continuous thought to the lay out of their work.

### IV.—MEASUREMENT

The problem of statistical measurement of output is no new one, and in the main it is applicable chiefly to routine duties of a constantly repetitive nature. Possibly the advent of machine posting has provided this method with its most fruitful field, but in the trend towards greater complexity and a more varied division of labour in the administrative sphere it would probably not be true to infer that the field in question had become proportionately larger. There are indications in fact that the opposite is the case.

Where large blocks of clerical or machine-clerical work exists it is the usual procedure to subject the staff to an output average and to insist upon the average being maintained by each member of the staff. Large recording and issuing offices, like the Ministry of Labour at Kew and the Money Order Department of the Post Office, worked out impressive schemes on this basis, and it is true that such organisations (*pace* the critics of the somnolent Civil Service!) literally went like clockwork, not always to the advantage of those unfortunates who become involved in the mechanical routine for long periods. My memory takes me back to the working of such a system under the pre-machine conditions of the Post Office Savings Bank at West Kensington in the palmy days of 1913, and there can be little doubt of its efficiency. Not only were there carefully fixed averages for the writing of withdrawal warrants, deposit acknowledgments and docket extractions, but each day varied in length according to the volume of the day's inflow of work and the working out of the daily time-target or average by the supervisors was done with such precision that I still find it a matter for wonder across the intervening span of years and cavalcade of hectic events. But the question of averaging is fraught with difficulties and, quite apart from the staff's lack of enthusiasm for what they usually allege leads to slave driving<sup>6</sup> and the fact that it is in any case of limited applicability, there is the wider difficulty of determining the appropriate work rate, which will need to be within the range of the majority of the rank and file. It must not slow down the efficient so badly that even with the spurring up of the majority the average attains a lower aggregate performance than more free-and-easy methods would achieve. Here as elsewhere in assessing the average

value of the staff unit it has to be remembered that we are not dealing with a sample of individual workers all of whom can give a 100 per cent. output, but that we have to fit workers of varying efficiency into our scheme.

The same averaging principle is sometimes used in the determining of the staffing basis of particular offices or blocks of work, and this is especially useful where there are a large number of offices all dealing with similar functions. Thus the basic staffs of post offices and employment exchanges may be determined by adding up the average number of work units of each type dealt with and applying an appropriate formula. However, there are many snags in working out such formulæ: staff units do not necessarily vary proportionately with the number of work units. Local problems may lead to peculiar variations in the time taken to carry out the standard operation, and it is not unusual to have to make a marginal time allowance for indeterminate transactions. In this way the system of estimating on the basis of equivalence of work units is considerably weakened. It would be helpful in many ways if staffing problems could be solved more often on a statistical basis, and it may be that organisation and methods research will lead to the widening of the scope and effectiveness of such methods.

It may be, too, that similar principles will be found to be applicable to the non-routine sphere. Thus supervisory officers may be asked to carry out an internal census on lines laid down on sufficiently comparable terms to enable a general assessment to be made. It would be better in many cases if such internal censuses were on *ad hoc* and not on a periodical basis. In some offices it has been determined that officers of a certain rank (say of staff officer grade or its equivalent) should keep a succinct log book of activities, which should always be available for inspection by the chief. Such records, where appropriate, would also be of inestimable usefulness to the investigator. Another method would be to ask for a typical weekly or monthly analysis of work actually performed in a branch or organisation, which, however, owing to varying assessments would only afford a series of general statements against which a more detailed examination could be checked and perhaps the general layout and performance reviewed.

#### V.—INSPECTION

It is hardly necessary to enlarge upon the effectiveness of inspection in the achievement of general efficiency standards. The successes of the Factory Inspectorate,<sup>7</sup> going back to the early days of factory legislation of nearly a century and a half ago and of the school inspectorate under the Board of Education<sup>8</sup> are too widely recognised to need further comment, but it does not necessarily follow that a method appropriate between the official and non-official spheres or between the central and local spheres will have the same effectiveness within the sphere controlled by one and the same authority. The essence of audit is that the auditor should be free and independent. It has, however, shown that the internal administrative audit can be exceedingly effective and, for example, the Ministry of Labour has operated an audit of this sort effectively for some years.

The inspection may be restricted to a particular objective, *e.g.*, the supervision and check up of security arrangements, as undertaken within certain departments, or it may be general, *i.e.*, relating to staff, building, layout and efficiency, compliance with instructions and the general operation of the branch. Such general inspections are eminently desirable in an organisation consisting of a number of smaller widely distributed geographical units to which general regulations and instructions apply. The inspector's reports may make available to head office much useful local information upon which rules for achieving a

more uniform organisation may be based, while his advice to officers-in-charge of such offices will enable them to benefit from experience that they might otherwise have travelled far to seek. But—be certain of this—if the inspector acts in a carping spirit, as was once too often the attitude, he will get little out of his efforts. He must create the impression that he is out to help and not least the officers whose performance he is investigating.

One should perhaps mention the less easily definable effects of inspection which result in the organisations inspected taking steps to ensure in advance that there shall be little room for criticism. Thus one cannot judge results entirely upon reports brought back by the inspectors, although such reports should be of inestimable value to the organisation and methods investigators.

#### VI.—STAFF CONTACTS

So far we have been dealing with those administrative techniques in which the "O. & M." expert is directly concerned as an investigator, now we turn to two matters falling entirely within the field of personnel administration, the results of which, however, cannot fail to have a considerable influence upon his field of operations.

The problem of contacts between the management and the rank and file becomes a major one as soon as an organisation exceeds the size at which the personal touch can be effective in creating productive staff relationships. In large organisations, for good or ill, the personal touch tends to disappear, and it is often maintained that only in a small concern can the enthusiasm of the chief percolate to all corners of the organisation and so obtain maximum results. Of course the balance is not all in favour of the small concern since the economics of large-scale organisation are one of the main causes of its growth, nevertheless it is necessary to do what is possible to maintain the virtues of the smaller concern within the wider environment so as to negative the soul-destroying propensities of large-scale organisation—and the Civil Service is essentially large-scale organisation in its most advanced form.

There are three types of internal contact, viz.:—

- (1) Contacts between the directing staff and other members in course of official duties;
- (2) Contacts between the two elements through the accredited staff co-ordinating machinery, *e.g.*, associations, Whitley Councils, special committees;
- (3) Contacts between members of the staff in course of social activities.

With (2) and (3) we are not concerned here, although with regard to staff relationships falling in the second category it should be noted that there is no field within the Service in which greater advances have been made since 1919, with the result that the existing staff organisation should be able to lighten considerably the task of the "O. & M." officer, whose policy should be to seek this co-operation all along the line. In regard to the third category, this depends largely upon the initiative both of the directing elements and the staff and varies considerably with time and place, but it does seem unfortunately true that in many offices there has been practically a total closing down of social activities during the war, attributable in the main to pressure of work, special outside activities and black-out problems.

Under the first heading above the problem is more important than many directing officers appear to recognise. The question is "How shall the widest possible personal contacts be developed between those at the top and the rank and file?" Not only is it essential that the staff should be known but that members of the staff should have the feeling that they are known. It should not



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be possible for the head of a large department to go round his office on retirement at sixty plus and not know many officers who had been in his department as long as twenty years. Yet this did happen a few years back within the present writer's personal experience.

The problem is not an easy one to solve. Whether the mountain should be brought to Mahomet or *vice versa* is still a matter for consideration; possibly a judicious mixture of the two methods should be worked out. Certainly the chief officers should make periodical visits, especially where the staff is spread out geographically, and make some real attempt at getting to know the staff. Even where it is very large such visits will ensure that the opposite process takes place, and it is a good thing that the head should cease to be a mythical being in the minds of many of his subordinates. In this way the most junior member will get to know those who are in control and will be less inclined to regard the organisation as a soul-destroying machine.

I know what will be the usual answer here: such officers have not the time—and it will contain more than a grain of truth. The people at the top are kept busy by their ordinary duties. Yet it must be generally recognised that personnel contacts, albeit requiring a special technique, are indeed among their ordinary duties and that the smooth running of the administrative machinery may depend largely upon such activities on their part. Efficiency must depend so much upon the personnel side that it would be dangerous to overlook its importance. In the Service there are still many directing officers who appear to take the view that the show will run itself. This is only apparently so, and here the "O. & M." man will also find fresh fields to conquer.

### VII.—STAFF FLUIDITY

We are now, I fear, fast running beyond the bounds of organisation and methods proper, yet in practice the new field will be found so much to ramificate through the fields of efficiency that hardly any subject is outside its scope.

In an administrative system carefully adjusted to the efficiency needs of the new community it would be an anomaly if we spent so much energy on organisation and methods and continued to assume that the personnel was so eminently interchangeable within the various grades that there was no point in arranging for changes other than those called for by normal routine practice. If there is, in theory, not a pin to choose between, say, a junior executive officer in A and another of more or less equal seniority in B why move them about? That is the line of least resistance that has generally been followed—up to 1939 at any rate. But in the course of the present war we have learned something about the need to reduce the margins of inefficiency that arise when we persist in keeping the round pegs in the square holes to which accident has assigned them. The Service still has a bias against the civil servant who knows other things, and it is inclined to "go abroad" for its expert knowledge. I am not suggesting that the services of the outside expert should not be sought—there is no question of the Civil Service becoming a closed profession—but I do suggest that we should not harbour a bias favourable to the non-civil servant, whether or not he has been a success in his own particular field. The "O. & M." people will be concerned to see that the utmost is made of the talents within the Civil Service field and that civil servants are encouraged to make available any knowledge and abilities that may contribute to the efficiency of the public service. This will mean more fluidity, and that in its turn will mean changes in the present staff organisation of the Service.

Other matters in this field for discussion will be the uses of the flying staffs to economise labour wherever peak loads require special "blitz" methods, or the assignment of a fluid relief staff for general use within a branch or section, weekly allocation of the members of such staff being arranged by the staff control in accordance with the flow of work as determined by periodical work returns and the up-to-date reports of senior officers.

### *Quo Vadimus?*

The innovator, even on lines already laid down by an authority of such importance as the Select Committee, is bound to encounter great difficulties. Thought on the administrative process has been very sparingly contributed and the results still remain to be rationalised. It is clear, for example, that there must exist a world of experience on most of the topics briefly referred to in his essay, but if we are asked where it is to be found it will not be easy to give a clear-cut answer. Truly the organisation and methods people have a tremendous task ahead of them, but they are also being offered a great opportunity.

Perhaps their biggest enemy will be the prejudice of those who honestly believe that theory is an academic preoccupation in which the practical man has no call to waste his time. Even in the light of war experience, where the meticulous, if somewhat unimaginative, attention to detail on the part of the Germanic enemy has again proved the importance of organisation in waging war, we have been slow to learn. To the prejudice of the practical man, a prejudice in which most of us, being British, characteristically share, will have to be added the inertia of all who say—without any real show of regret—that far-reaching changes, even if desirable, will not be possible in view of past experience. But we must not overlook the third group who say quite definitely that changes are not desirable if such changes mean more organisation, since that means a further stultification of the individual's unique contribution.

They appear to me to be wrong in the light of history. A new increasingly complex world is developing whether we want it or no. It is happening to-day, and we have got to deal with it or throw up the sponge. This second alternative we, as a nation, do not accept. That is why we are fighting.

As a part of this new complex world we shall need a Civil Service fit and capable of dealing with it. This means new methods and new complexities; such a development is inherent in the situation that is arising. We have no choice, and in view of the increasing importance of administration through the whole range of human activities we shall do well to attend to this matter. We should sympathise with those who say that they fear the results, the imposition of an administrative strait jacket upon the field of human enterprise, but challenge the inevitability of such a consummation. First we should point out that there is a world of difference between being compelled to do things because they are necessary and going out to grapple with a problem that common sense tells lies ahead. Second we should throw grave doubts upon the proposition that improved organisation, even with greater complexities, necessarily means less freedom. In fact the aim of good administration should be the very opposite. In obtaining higher efficiency standards the new administrative organisation becomes a more perfect instrument for the attainment of the ends in view. Those ends are to increase the benefits and satisfactions which the community as a whole may derive from its public service fulfilling on its behalf the demands of a new age. But in the new system the position of the civil servant himself is important, and there is no reason why he should not derive more satisfaction from working in an environment so organised that he has the feeling that his personal contribution is not being stultified.

Organisation appears as the conscious means of the expert dealing with evolving situations and, almost paradoxically, its function is similar to that of habit in a more or less static human system: it enables more attention to be spared to the individual things that matter. The end of organisation is to release, not to enslave.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Sixteenth Report from the Select Committee on National Expenditure (Session 1941-1942), 120.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, page 28, para. 85, *et seq.*

<sup>3</sup> See "The Art and Technique of Administration in German Ministries." By Arnold Brecht and Comstock Glaser, in the series of Harvard Political Studies (1940).

<sup>4</sup> See my "Civil Service Staff Relationships. (Wm. Hodge & Co.) Page 125.

<sup>5</sup> Bertrand Russell's "Freedom and Organisation, 1814-1914," is a penetrating study of this development in its wider social and political aspects.

<sup>6</sup> To a certain extent the application of averages to clerical work bears a relationship to Taylorism in industry—recently expanded into Stakanhovism in Russia—and such methods have never been popular in Britain since they have too great a flavour of totalitarianism. Of course the average does not show the worker the short cut as Taylorism sets out to do: it acts in a more general way and leaves the individual to adopt methods suitable to his own mentality so long as he achieves the prescribed time-target.

<sup>7</sup> I cannot resist mentioning here T. K. Djang's admirable study, "Factory Inspection in Great Britain." (George Allen and Unwin.) 1942.

<sup>8</sup> See especially the chapter on "The Inspectorate" in the recently published Norwood Report, page 50 *et seq.* ("Curriculum and Examinations in Secondary Schools." H.M.S.O., 1943.)

## Anomalies and Inequalities in Local Rating

By the late F. W. SHOWERS, F.S.I.

(Surveyor of the Great Western Railway, 1922-1942)

DURING the hearing of a recent rating appeal in the High Court, the Judge remarked to Counsel, "Do not let us go too far into this realm of fantasy," and Counsel replied, "My Lord, unfortunately the whole of rating is in a world of fantasy."

All those familiar with the subject will agree as to the fantastic character of the English system of local taxation and also as to the glaring anomalies and inequalities in the distribution of the burden; rates not now being levied in relation to "ability to pay," "benefit received," or any other principle. It has been said that the whole subject is of such difficulty and complexity that it is impossible to be positive without being presumptuous, or exhaustive without being wearisome. Reliance on fact and authority will, perhaps, enable the writer to escape the charge of being presumptuous, and it is hoped to avoid wearisomeness by not troubling readers with too much detail.

### THE ANOMALIES AND INEQUALITIES AND THEIR CAUSES

Broadly speaking the causes of the anomalies and inequalities may be classified thus:—

- (a) The statutory principle of valuation.
- (b) Decisions of the Courts applying the statutory principle to various kinds of rateable property.
- (c) Properties valued exceptionally or by statute exempted from rates.
- (d) Differential rating.
- (e) Rating relief.
- (f) Absence of uniformity in the valuations of Rating and Assessment Authorities.

(a) *The Statutory Principle of Valuation*

Rates of various names—formerly Poor, Lighting, General District, Special Expenses, Borough, City—now General and Special—have been levied with statutory authority for 368 years. During the first 268 years of that period, rates could be levied on the basis of the inhabitant's ability to pay, measured by the annual value of all his property visible in the local area; but for the last 100 years the basis of liability has been the annual letting value of real property occupied within the local area.

The history of the subject begins with the Poor Relief Act, 1572, which authorised the first compulsory poor rate. This was necessitated by the disposal of religious communities, upon which the poor relied for relief and by the failure of attempts to collect the requisite funds by voluntary means. The customary practice was to expect or require the voluntary or semi-voluntary contributors (the justices having in certain circumstances power to fix the amount) to pay according to their *ability and substance*. This practice was naturally followed in the Act of 1572, which provided that the justices shall "by their good discretions" tax every inhabitant towards the relief of the poor and also shall appoint overseers of the poor.<sup>1</sup>

The Poor Relief Act, 1601, fixed the parish as the rating area and directed the overseers to tax "every inhabitant, parson, vicar, and other, and of every occupier of lands, houses, tithes impropriate or propriations of tithes, coal mines or saleable underwoods in the same parish" the taxes "to be gathered out of the same parish accordingly to the *ability* of the same parish."

In 1633 it was decided in Sir Anthony Earby's case "that assessments ought to be made according to the visible estate of the inhabitants there both real and personal." The extent to which "stock-in-trade"<sup>2</sup> was in fact rated is uncertain, but it must be remembered that in the seventeenth century manufactures were very scattered and carried on side by side with agriculture and that each parish would be likely to do as it pleased. At the same time industries and population were expanding especially in the north-west and the rating question was becoming of greater importance.

In the belief apparently that for the most part the occupiers of land only were in fact rated the Government passed the Parochial Assessment Act, 1836,<sup>3</sup> which provided that—

"no rate for the relief of the poor in England and Wales shall be allowed by any justices or be of any force which shall not be made upon an estimate of the net annual value of the several hereditaments rated thereunto; that is to say at the rent which the same might reasonably be expected to let from year to year, free of all usual tenants' rates and taxes, and tithe commutation rent charge, if any, and deducting therefrom the probable average annual cost of the repairs, insurance and other expenses, if any, necessary to maintain them in a state to command such rent."

The Act contained no reference to stock-in-trade and contention arose as to whether or not it was rateable, and in 1838 in response to enquiries the Poor Law Commissioners expressed the opinion that stock-in-trade was not liable.

In 1839 there was an appeal to the Courts (*Queen v. Lumsdaine*) against a rate which was limited to the occupiers of real property. During this appeal Lord Denman said:—

"It is not improbable that the legislature intended to alter the law upon the subject of rating personal property, but I am clearly of the opinion that the intention has not been carried into effect: the object of the Act does not appear to have been to introduce any new principle of rating but to affirm that which has been already established by decisions of the court."

## ANOMALIES AND INEQUALITIES IN LOCAL RATING

The Poor Law Commissioners thereupon issued a circular letter to the overseers in which they say:—

“It can no longer be doubted that inhabitants of parishes remain liable to the poor rate in respect of stock-in-trade in like manner as they were before the passing of the Act to regulate parochial assessments and that every rate may be successfully appealed against if any inhabitant having productive stock-in-trade be omitted therefrom.”

Parliament, alarmed; it is said, at the possible effect of the position on the expanding industries of the north, passed the Poor Rate Exemption Act, 1840, which enacts that it shall not be lawful for the overseers of any parish to tax any inhabitant thereof, as such inhabitant, in respect of his ability derived from the profits of stock-in-trade or any other property; with the proviso that nothing in the Act should affect the liability of any occupier of land, etc. The Act was originally in force only until the 31st December, 1841, but was continued annually by the Expiring Laws Continuance Act down to 1921, after which by the Expiring Laws Act, 1922, it was made permanent.

The Assistant Secretary of the Poor Law Commissioners, when giving evidence in 1844 before the Select Committee on Railways, was asked whether the law as it then stood in regard to profits of trade was not what might be regarded as a well-considered law, but only a temporary remedy for a temporary inconvenience, and replied:—

“It was considered that the extension of the principle of rating stock-in-trade into the north of England and many places where it has never been heard of, was an evil which ought not to be encountered so suddenly as it was likely to take place; and an act to exempt stock-in-trade was passed avowedly only to operate for one year. It has been continued because there has not been an opportunity to reconsider the matter fully.”

He added that his own experience assured him that nothing could be more disorderly than the present mode of rating. Thus was established the principle of law by which local rates became chargeable in respect of the annual value<sup>4</sup> of immovable property only.

### (b) *Decisions of the Courts applying the Statutory Principle to Various Kinds of Rateable Property*

In 1840 properties not usually let on yearly tenancies existed (*e.g.*, canals), but it was left to the Courts to apply the statutory principle without the assistance even of definition of the terms used in the statute. The Act of 1572 merely directs the justices and overseers to carry out the duties laid upon them by “their good discretions,” and the first appeals to the courts sought instructions as to the meaning of the words “inhabitants” and “occupier”—in relation to the question whether both owner and occupier were liable for taxation as “inhabitants,” and what constituted “occupation.”

Early difficulties in regard to valuation of property arose on canals which were never the subject of yearly tenancies and, moreover, extended through many parishes, while machinery did not exist for valuing them otherwise than in parochial sections. Then followed questions whether the tolls paid to the proprietors by the users were to form the basis of assessment and, if so, in what parishes were such tolls to be rated. The results of the discussion of these questions were later applied to the still more difficult problem of the rating of railways and other public utility undertakings. There was almost continuous litigation on the subject from 1633 (Sir Anthony Earby's case) which decided that an “inhabitant” was rateable in respect of personal property, to 1941 when the assessment of the London Passenger Transport Board's undertaking was settled by the Railway and Canal Commissioners after a hearing estimated to cost £20,000.



In dealing with the railways the judges—while protesting that the matter was really one for those who made the laws and not for those who expounded them—had no alternative but to approve, and perhaps improve, methods of valuation devised by surveyors and lawyers. The decisions of the judges were founded on the facts presented to them without regard to the effect of such decisions in relation to equity as between the occupiers of different classes of property.

Broadly, the judgments of the Courts resulted in rateable property being divided into three classes each having its own method of valuation:—

- (1) Farms, houses and other premises which are actually let on yearly tenancies or in regard to which the annual value can be estimated by comparison with similar properties which are actually let on the terms of the statute.
- (2) Factories and works owned by the occupier and not the subject of any arrangements between landlord and tenant. These are valued by the "contractor's method," i.e., on the assumption that the occupier would pay a rent equivalent to interest on the capital value of buildings and site.
- (3) "Special properties," such as canals, railways, tramways, electricity, gas and water works. The assessment of these properties is based upon net receipts from which a deduction (called the "occupier's share") is made for interest, profits and risks expressed as a percentage upon the capital assumed to be provided by a hypothetical tenant for the purchase of rolling stock, stores, furniture, etc. (known as "tenant's capital"). Where as in the case of gravitating waterworks the tenant's capital is small, the allowance for profit is expressed as a percentage of gross or net receipts.

At this stage it is desirable to point out that the distribution of the burden of local expenditure on any equitable principle is obviously impossible with three such diverse methods of valuation; by qualification in the application of those methods (some properties may be valued by one or other of the methods according to circumstances), and in some cases the result of the valuation may be nil.

Then the original exclusion of personal property from rating (1840) has been followed (in 1929) by the total exemption of agricultural land and buildings.

The Courts have modified the application of the method for the benefit of certain properties (*e.g.*, University buildings and colleges), and there are cases in which it is accepted that the valuation may be nil (municipal waterworks). Again there is a special Act dealing with advertising stations.

The legal principle (the value to a yearly tenant) being the same, theoretically profits of trade are excluded from the assessment of all three classes of property, but practically such profits are only excluded in the assessment of class (3) if an adequate allowance is made for the "occupier's share." In classes (1) and (2) the income of the occupier is not a factor in the calculation of annual value so that profits of trade are necessarily excluded, except in so far as it may be said that a shop, for example, may command a higher rent than another because it will attract a larger trade and, therefore, produce greater profits.

With three such different methods of valuation equality between the occupiers of the three classes was impossible, and equally diverse was the burden of the ratepayers in each class. There cannot have been any great number of properties to which it was easy to apply the standard of the yearly tenant.

The difficulty may be pointed out of applying the principle of the yearly tenant to premises in areas in which leasehold tenure is customary. For example, in London there may be streets of shops all let on long leases at various rents

and for different periods. Moreover, adjoining premises let for the same term of years may be subject to substantially different rents, owing to the greater need of the particular occupiers to establish themselves and to remain in certain situations. This emphasises the extent to which rateable property lacks any sure basis for the statutory principle of valuation and provides a wide field for expert controversy, thus placing the majority of ratepayers at a great disadvantage. Attempts have been made to establish a practice of calculating the annual value of shops at a price per foot varying with the relationship of the area to the street frontage. This is almost entirely arbitrary and must, therefore, be frequently referred to a tribunal of appeal to settle, and its judgment must largely be based on its preference for one witness over another. There is an alternative which sometimes appears to be adopted of "splitting the difference" between the figures of the two sides.

On a consideration of the foregoing matter it will doubtless be agreed that the annual value of the premises occupied cannot possibly be an equal measure of the ability of the occupiers to bear taxation. This is so as between the individuals in each class as well as between the three classes.

(c) *Properties Valued Exceptionally or by Statute Exempted from Rates*

There are a number of properties the occupiers of which have long enjoyed statutory total exemption, and other properties having peculiar features have been treated exceptionally by the Legislature or by the Courts. These will be noted here, leaving for later reference cases of "differential rating."

The first item in this summary is "Hereditaments occupied by the Crown," but there are exceptions even to this. In one or two instances the liability to rates in the case of property acquired by the Crown has been expressly preserved by Act of Parliament to the full extent or to the amount at which the land was rateable at the date of the acquisition. Notwithstanding the legal exception of the Crown it is the practice of the Treasury to make a grant to local authorities in lieu of rates. This grant is, however, limited to property maintained directly out of money voted by Parliament and this does not satisfy the local authorities.

Assize courts, prisons and police stations come within the exemption, but it has been held that quarters provided for prison officers *outside* the prison were rateable, but that similar quarters *inside* the prison were not rateable.

Before the Local Government Act, 1888, when the civil business of the county was conducted by the justices, the premises in which such business was carried on were exempt from rates, but the county council offices of to-day are liable for rates.

Local authorities were formerly held not to be rateable in respect of public sewers, but in 1893 the House of Lords established the proposition that where a public body have to perform a duty which involves the occupation of land, the absence of pecuniary profit arising from that occupation does not prevent the occupation from being beneficial; and being beneficial it is rateable.

While "non-provided" schools and premises belonging to scientific societies are exempt university buildings and colleges are rateable, but Quarter Sessions have treated such buildings exceptionally on the ground that they were unnecessarily ornate; that the University were not under any obligation to provide such costly structures, nor did it spend its own money in acquiring them—they were given or bequeathed by benefactors whose aim was either to benefit the University or to create a lasting memorial of their own names. Therefore the method of valuation sanctioned by the Courts was as follows:—to eliminate all that was of a merely monumental or memorial character; subject to this elimination, to estimate the cost of a building giving equal accommodation and equally suitable for the purposes for which it is now used, with sufficient ornamentation

to make it suitable for the requirements and dignity of a university; and to take 2 per cent. or 3 per cent. on the capital value of such a building (added to the value of the land on which it stood) as the rateable value to be ascertained.

Places used for advertisements are the subject of a special Act—Advertising Stations (Rating) Act, 1889 (52 and 53 Vict. C. 27)—which provides that where any land is used for advertisements and not otherwise occupied the person who shall permit the same to be so used shall be rateable. Where any land or hereditament occupied for other purposes is used for the exhibition of advertisements the rateable value of the land or hereditament shall be so estimated as to include the increased value due to the advertisements.

Farm houses are also the subject of special statutory treatment. As noted elsewhere in this memorandum the occupiers of agricultural land and buildings are totally exempt from rates in accordance with the Local Government Act, 1929. Section 72 of that Act provides that as from 1 April, 1930, the gross value for rating purposes of a house occupied in connection with agricultural land and used as the dwelling-house of a person who—

- (a) is primarily engaged in carrying on or directing agricultural operations on that land; or
- (b) is employed in agricultural operations on that land in the service of the occupier thereof and is entitled whether as tenant or otherwise, so to use the house only while so employed,

shall, so long as the house is so occupied and used, be estimated by reference to the rent at which the house might reasonably be expected to let from year to year if it could not be occupied and used otherwise than as aforesaid. Apart from the fact that a definite part of the rent of a farm is not paid in respect of the dwelling-house, and there is, therefore, no standard by which to test the qualified rental value of such a house, many farmhouses are used by the farmers as "guest houses," and as such would—apart from the statutory provision referred to—be assessed at a much higher sum. This means that the former has an unfair advantage when competing with "guest houses" which are not also farmhouses. Again there are cases in which small farms have been purchased by people of means, who, having erected a modern residence, have successfully claimed the benefit of the section of the Act referred to on the ground that they were poultry farmers, the result being that the rateable value was half of what it would otherwise have been. The definition of "agricultural land" in the Rating and Valuation (Apportionment) Act, 1928 (Section 2), includes "land used for the purpose of poultry farming."

It may be convenient to note here the exceptional way in which machinery in factories has been treated in the past. Prior to 1840 when personal property was rateable machinery could be taxed whether it belonged to the owner or the occupier of the premises which contained it. After 1840 it was assumed to be exempt from rating, but a number of appeals took place in which it is said the Poor Rate Exemption Act of 1840 was not even cited in argument. The results of these appeals were inconsistent, but the general effect appeared to be that while machinery was not in itself rateable it was "to be taken into account" in valuing the hereditament which was rateable, but what was meant by "taken into account" was left undecided. In 1906 in a case known as "*Kirby v. Hunslet Union*" an attempt was made to get a definite decision of the House of Lords on the question whether machines placed by the tenant in engineering premises were to be assumed to form part of the rateable hereditament. This attempt failed. The Lord Chancellor in his judgment said (*inter alia*):—

"The overseer has a comparatively simple problem to solve, although it is difficult enough sometimes; he sees the place being conducted as a

brewery, or an iron foundry or what not; he looks at the premises, he looks at the furniture which is necessary for carrying on the business as a brewery or foundry; he does not in his own mind analyse, and to my mind he ought not to analyse, what would be likely to be the initial arrangements between the intended brewer and the owner of the freehold, to see who should provide this or that engine, or what not, but he looks at the premises as they are, as they are being occupied and as they are being used and he says to himself 'Well, looking at the whole of the place, such and such is the rent which would probably be paid by a tenant from year to year for such an establishment as this.'

When one remembers that the method of valuation of a factory is interest on the capital value of structures and site a less satisfactory judgment from a practical standpoint can hardly be imagined, and it gave rise to a great deal of trouble and expense except in those areas—and there were some—in which the Assessment Committees declined to apply it. Moreover, logically the judgment should have been followed by the reassessment of dwelling-houses on the assumption that the hypothetical tenant rented a hereditament containing furniture. Both factories and dwelling-houses are sometimes let furnished, but there does not ever appear to have been a case in which the rent of a dwelling-house furnished formed the basis of the assessment.

However, the rating of machinery after being the subject of litigation for more than 100 years was put upon a satisfactory basis—so far as factories valued on the contractor's basis were concerned—by the Rating and Valuation Act, 1925, Section 24. This Act gave effect to a recommendation in the final report of the Royal Commission on Local Taxation (1901). In Scotland this recommendation was given effect to in 1902.

The intention of the exception in Sub-section (1) and the provision of Sub-section (10) of Section 24 of the Act of 1925 is obscure. Sub-section (1) states that the provisions of the section "shall have effect with respect to the valuation of any hereditament other than a hereditament the value of which is ascertained by reference to the accounts, receipts or profits of the undertaking carried on therein." The words of Sub-section (10) are:—

"Nothing in this section shall affect the law or practice with regard to the valuation of hereditaments the value of which is ascertained by reference to the accounts, receipts or profits of an undertaking carried on therein or be taken to extend the class of property which is under the law and practice as in force at the commencement of this Act deemed to be provided by the occupier and to form part of his capital."

Section 24 with the Third Schedule of the Act defines the "Classes of Machinery and Plant to be deemed to be part of the Hereditament," and broadly accords with the usual relationship of landlord and tenant—that the landlord provides the boilers, shafting, lifts, railways and anything in the nature of a building or structure, and that the tenant equips the factory with the process machinery. The former but not the latter is to be included in the capital value to which a percentage is applied to arrive at the estimated rent of the hereditament.

Now what is the effect of Sub-section 10. Premises which have been valued by reference to "the accounts, receipts or profits of the undertaking" are railways, tramways, canals, harbours, water, gas and electricity undertakings, mines, quarries, brickfields, cemeteries, racecourses and licensed premises.

The Railways (Valuation for Rating) Act, 1930, provides for the valuation of the four main line companies and the London Passenger Transport Board by the receipts and expenses method, and it has been held that the same method

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must be applied, as a matter of law, to waterworks, but in regard to the other hereditaments it has been laid down as a general proposition in the House of Lords that the method of valuation was a matter for the assessment committee or quarter sessions.

Again, Section 1 (1) of the Act of 1930 states that "the provisions of the Rating and Valuation Acts relating to the ascertainment of the values of hereditaments shall, save as expressly provided by this Act, cease to apply in the case of railway hereditaments in England occupied by a railway company to which this Act applies."

### (d) *Differential Rating*

There are two kinds of differential rating—those embodied in general and local acts and applying to particular classes of property on the principle of "benefit received"; and those applied by provisional orders altering the boundaries of local government areas. The latter are usually for definite periods, and therefore come to an end in course of time.

Outstanding general acts are the Lighting and Watching Act, 1833, and the Public Health Act, 1875. Both these Acts provided that lighting and sanitary rates in respect of buildings should be three times the amounts in respect of agricultural lands and certain other hereditaments. The Rating and Valuation Act, 1925, did away with lighting and sanitary rates, substituting therefor general and special rates, but in urban areas the partial exemptions were continued in the form of percentages of the net annual values. The hereditaments now entitled to deduction from the net annual value will be found in paragraph (3) of Part II of the Second Schedule of the Act of 1925, which is as follows:—

"Tithe, tithe commutation rent charge and other payments in lieu of tithe issuing out of any land, and any land used as a railway constructed under the powers of any act for public conveyance or as a canal or towing path for a canal, any land covered with water, and any woodlands."

Before the Act of 1925 there was consolidation of rates under local acts in some urban areas, and the allowances contained in such local acts are continued. In every other urban area a scheme was submitted by the rating authority and approved by the Ministry of Health providing for a percentage of the net annual value based on the average relief for the ten years 1914-1924. The percentages vary from 1 to 61, the average being about 33.

### (e) *Rating Relief*

Relief from rates was granted to the occupiers of certain classes of property by the Rating and Valuation (Apportionment) Act, 1928, and the Local Government Act, 1929. The classes of property are:—

- (a) Agricultural land and buildings (other than dwelling-houses).
- (b) Factories, workshops and mines.
- (c) Railways, canals and docks.

As from 1st October, 1929, agricultural land and buildings shall be deemed to have no rateable value, and particulars with respect of such land and buildings shall not be included in any valuation list. In the case of the other two classes of property the rateable value is to be taken to be one-quarter of the net annual value.

Various provisions and qualifications contained in the Act have given rise to difficulty. Section 72 of the Act of 1929 provides that the gross value of a house occupied in connection with agricultural land shall be estimated by reference to the rent at which the house might reasonably be expected to let from year to year if it could not be occupied and used otherwise than in connection with agricultural land. The definition of "agricultural land" in Section 2 of the Act of 1928 includes "land used for the purpose of poultry farming."



## ANOMALIES AND INEQUALITIES IN LOCAL RATING

Section 3 (1) of the Act of 1928 (as amended by Section 69 of the Act of 1929) provides that the expression "industrial hereditament" means a hereditament (not being a freight-transport hereditament) occupied and used as a mine or mineral railway or, subject as hereinafter provided, as a factory or workshop:—

Provided that the expression industrial hereditament does not include a hereditament occupied and used as a factory or workshop if it is primarily used and occupied for the following purposes or for any combination of such purposes, that is to say:—

- (a) a dwelling-house;
- (b) a retail shop;
- (c) distributive wholesale business;
- (d) storage;
- (e) a public supply undertaking;
- (f) any other purposes, whether or not similar to any of the foregoing, which are not those of a factory or workshop.

### (2) For the purposes of this Act—

- (a) a hereditament shall not be deemed not to be occupied and used as a factory or workshop by reason only of the fact that the owner or occupier of the hereditament is the only person working therein or that no other person working therein is in his employment.
- (b) any place used by the occupier for the housing or maintenance of his road vehicles or as stables shall, notwithstanding that it is situate within the close, curtilage or precincts forming a factory or workshop and used in connection therewith, be deemed not to form part of the factory or workshop, but save as aforesaid, the expressions "factory" and "workshop" have respectively the same meanings as in the Factory and Workshop Acts, 1901 to 1920.

This proviso has caused a good deal of trouble and some litigation. Again it was understood that one of the objects of this rating relief was to assist the heavy industries to compete with foreign firms, but the Acts do not limit the relief to those needing it. For example, brewers, chocolate and tobacco manufacturers get it and it is hard to imagine that they need it.

Railway companies were treated exceptionally, for some reason unknown, in as much as they were required to pay the relief into a freight rebates fund for the purpose of making rebates from charges in respect of certain selected railway traffics. The scheme for dealing with these rebates will be found in the Eleventh Schedule of the Act of 1929, Parts II, III and IV of that Schedule containing particulars of the selected traffics. The scheme of rebates is reviewed annually by the Railway Rates Tribunal, who can make alterations in it subject to the directions of the Minister of War Transport. Considerable modifications of the original scheme have been made as a result of the reductions of rateable value which followed the revaluations under the Railways (Valuation for Rating) Act, 1930.

Mention should be made of other provisions of the Acts which have been, and still are, the subject of litigation. Clause 5 (1) of the Act of 1928 which defines the expression "freight transport hereditament" has the following proviso:—

Provided that a hereditament primarily occupied and used as offices for, or for purposes ancillary to, the general direction and management of a railway, canal or dock undertaking shall not be deemed a freight transport hereditament.

When this proviso was settled its object was to exclude general offices such as those of the Port of London Authority on Tower Hill, but not offices of the railway companies usually forming part of a terminal station and included in the assessment of that station. The Railway Assessment Authority, however, are arbitrarily dividing the assessments of railway premises, so as to enable the Rating Authorities to collect full rates for premises in respect of which they have received Exchequer grants of three-quarters of a much larger amount—railway assessments having (since 1st April, 1931) been materially reduced.

Similar difficulties occur in regard to the proviso to Section 6 (1) of the Act of 1928, viz.:—

Provided that:—

- (b) in the case of a hereditament occupied and used for canal-transport purposes as a part of a canal undertaking or occupied and used for dock purposes as part of a dock undertaking no part of the hereditament, being a building, yard or other place primarily occupied and used for warehousing merchandise not in the course of being transported, shall be deemed to be occupied and used for transport purposes.

Endless trouble and expense can be caused by attempting meticulously to apply such provisions.

(f) *Absence of Uniformity in the Valuations of Rating and Assessment Authorities*

Another cause of inequality in the distribution of local burdens is the varying standards of valuation adopted by the Rating and Assessment Authorities.

One of the stated purposes of the Rating and Valuation Act, 1925, was "to promote uniformity in the valuation of property for the purpose of rates," and accordingly the Act provides for:—

- (a) the abolition of the office of overseer—an office first set up in Elizabethan times.
- (b) the establishment of the county borough, urban and rural district councils as the rating authorities.
- (c) the reduction in the number of assessment areas and assessment committees.
- (d) the establishment by every county council of a county valuation committee.
- (e) the constitution of a central valuation committee.

It would seem that this theoretically good bit of machinery has failed to promote uniformity owing apparently to financial pressure making its main object the extortion of more and more money from ratepayers. In former times the pressure for relief from taxation was said to come from what is called the "landed interest." Now local taxation affects what may be called "the housing interest"—the large number of people who are buying their dwellings through building societies and other bodies and who so closely calculate their means that a demand for a half-year's rates often depletes their funds. It is not uncommon for a borrower to appeal to his mortgagee to allow him to postpone the payment of an instalment of capital and interest on the ground that he has received a demand for rates and cannot immediately pay both.

HOW THE ANOMALIES AND INEQUALITIES CAN BE REMOVED

The problem is how to cure the anomalies and inequalities.

To some extent the inequalities have been ironed out by enlargement of rating areas, the transfer of certain services from district councils to county

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councils, and in some cases to central Government departments (prisons in 1877, trunk roads in 1936) and by means of subventions from national funds (now nearly half the total expenditure on rate fund services).

One further step in the same direction would complete the cure, that is to say the transfer of the collection of the money required for what are called "rate fund services" (except housing) from the rating authorities to the Inland Revenue to be raised as part of the Income Tax.

The outstanding advantage of this proposal would be the abolition of subsidies, grants, and the complicated system of whole and partial exemptions. It would also bring to an end the fantastic and costly attempts to find out what a yearly tenant would give for premises he could never obtain on a yearly tenancy. The "third valuation" could remain postponed.

It is perhaps more important to anticipate the objections that are likely to be advanced against the proposal. They appear to be as follows:—

- (a) That the collection of rates is an institution which has existed for three and a half centuries.

The historical factor could be applied to slums with which the incidence of rates has some connection, and the abolition of one is as justifiable as the other.

- (b) That the proposal would interfere with the independence of the local authorities and their control of expenditure.

Any independence and control of expenditure that local authorities enjoyed has gone as an effect of Government grants, and they are now wholly subservient to the central authorities. At any rate the officials of the larger local authorities now look for their instructions to Whitehall rather than to the shire or town hall.

- (c) That it would lead to extravagance.

The proposal is limited to the collection of the money, and the amount of money to be collected would be determined as at present with possibly additional collaboration between all authorities concerned; also the publication of a complete budget of local expenditure.

- (d) That the ratepayers would not readily know whether more or less was being spent by their representatives.

It is fairly safe to say that ratepayers have long since learnt the uselessness of enquiries about local rates. The rural district council states, what is quite true, that the bulk of the money raised is taken by the county council, and the county council places any blame for additional expenditure or the absence of reductions of expenditure upon the appropriate Ministry or Department, explaining that the latter are bearing half the cost.

- (e) That the amount of the rate per £ gives a ready means of comparing one area with another.

It is not now possible to tell from demand notes the cost either gross or net of any particular service because the poundages required for services towards which there are specific Government grants are shown as the net amounts whereas the block grant is shown in two items, amount receivable by rural district council and amount receivable by the county council.

The procedure suggested is that an annual budget for each county district should be sent to the county council, that each county council and county borough council should send a budget covering the county area to the Treasury who should submit such budgets to a body set up for the purpose. This body might be composed partly of nominees of the associations of local authorities

and partly of Treasury nominees. To enable the proposed expenditure of several authorities to be compared there should be a unit or units for each service. When all the budgets have been approved the total for each service and the aggregate sum should be submitted to Parliament and the money then raised by the Inland Revenue Department on the basis of the Income Tax Assessment. Under this scheme Parliament would have before it all the financial commitments of the Government of the country whether national or local, and the two would not be intermingled as at present.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The office of overseers of the poor continued until 1st April, 1927, when the Rating and Valuation Act, 1925, regimented the local authorities, did away with "good discretions" and with other factors led to the Rating and Valuation (Postponement of Valuations) Act, 1938.

<sup>2</sup> In the seventeenth century the term "personal property" was not used.

<sup>3</sup> This Act was repealed and replaced by Section 22 of the Rating and Valuation Act, 1925, which made things worse confounded.

<sup>4</sup> There is an exception even to this—see Section 7, the Rating Act, 1874, "Lease of the ordinary duration."

## Correspondence

## Some Reflections of a Layman upon the Conference on the Health Services.

IN a very interesting exchange of views three conclusions appeared to emerge as a result of this Conference; first, that although there might be differences of opinion as to the method by which it was to be established, the necessity for a comprehensive national health service was generally conceded; second, that the medical profession was by no means unanimous in its attitude towards the problem, in fact, on certain issues a complete divergence of views existed; and third, that despite the Government's pronouncement, doubts existed in many quarters of the advisability of the management of the new service being entrusted to the "well-tried machinery of local Government."

There will be few to dispute the first conclusion, for it seems intolerable in an enlightened democracy that any member of the community should be unable to obtain the best medical advice and attention when he needs it. There is, however, another aspect to be considered. In his Report, Sir William Beveridge advocates a plan for social security in which all, irrespective of income, will, generally speaking, pay the same contributions and receive the same benefits. Whilst it is undoubtedly in the national interest that a comprehensive health service, preventative and curative, should be available to the whole community, there appears to be no valid reason why the individual should not contribute towards its cost in accordance with his or her capacity to pay. In other words it should be an axiom of all social legislation that each should receive according to his needs and each should contribute according to his means. Under the Beveridge Plan, broadly speaking, most people will contribute in two ways, once, in their capacity as taxpayers and also as insured persons. In the opinion of the writer, it would be more equitable if the whole cost of the Plan were a charge on the National Exchequer, thus ensuring that it was recovered in accordance with capacity to pay. There would, of course, be objections to this method, but without going into details here, it should not be dismissed merely on account of administrative convenience.

The conflicting views expressed by the various sections of the medical profession leave the mere layman in a state of bewilderment. All medical

speakers appeared to appreciate the need for a change in the present system, but there seemed to be little agreement as to the form the change was to take or the method by which it was to be effected. Since the Conference, the British Medical Association has, by an overwhelming majority, rejected the plan for a State-controlled medical service, yet the Medical Practitioners' Union advocated a medical service controlled by a newly constituted Ministry of Health and, moreover, accepted the principle of a salaried medical staff. It is so obvious that whatever plan is ultimately decided upon, its success must depend upon the goodwill and co-operation of the medical profession, and it is to be hoped that the various interests will compose their differences for the common good.

The place of the local authority in the new scheme is difficult to define in the light of the many suggestions for the reconstitution of Local Government. There is a considerable body of opinion, and the medical profession appears to subscribe to this view, that the administration of a plan for the preservation of the nation's health is too important to be entrusted to local authorities already burdened with a multitude of other duties. Those holding these views advocate the setting up of *ad hoc* bodies responsible to the Ministry of Health. On the other hand, however, there are those to whom the very mention of *ad hoc* bodies is objectionable because they are not popularly elected, and, in consequence, are, it is alleged, undemocratic. In this connection it is as well to beware of platitudes for what often appears, *prima facie*, to be the very essence of democracy in theory, is sometimes quite the reverse in practice. There is much to be said for the view that the administration of the new plan should be entirely lifted out of the political plane, because whatever system is eventually decided upon, it is to be hoped that the doctors who work it will be chosen for their professional capabilities and not for their political opinions.

In conclusion, those upon whom will ultimately fall the responsibility of establishing the new health services, would do well to realise that the man in the street is less concerned with administrative niceties than with the treatment he will receive.

J. W. EDMONDS.

Superintendent's Office,  
Royal Albert Dock, E.16.  
4th October, 1943.

## Reviews

### The Reform of the Public Health Services

By SIR ARTHUR S. MACNALT, K.C.B. Published for Nuffield College by the Oxford University Press. Price 2s. 6d. net.

PROPOSALS for the reform of the country's medical services have come from a number of quarters before and during the war; but public interest in this very important matter has been quickened by the publication of the Beveridge Report. Because of the great authority with which he can speak, a contribution by Sir Arthur MacNalty, formerly Chief Medical Officer of the Ministry of Health, demands both respect and attention. "The Reform of the Public Health Services" to a certain extent meets other plans on common ground, but in some respects his proposals differ materially and will no doubt provoke dissent as well as assent.

As might be expected, Sir Arthur stresses the social aspect of medicine, recognising that ill-health and disease cannot satisfactorily be dealt with in isolation, ignoring all those contributing circumstances (environment, working



conditions, nutritional standards) which primarily are the associates of certain economic conditions. He has therefore some forceful things to say about the need for the creation of a Great Britain "in which a healthy population can flourish." This involves, among other things, an extension of communal meals, ample supplies to all of safe milk, better housing and town planning, shorter hours of work and improved facilities for leisure, especially outdoor recreation. He emphasises also the need for directing the education of the medical student towards the preservation of health and the prevention of disease, and for more systematic attempts to make the public aware of the health services available to them.

In an examination of the existing organisation of public health Sir Arthur is of the opinion that the Ministry of Health exercises too much—and largely unnecessary—control over local authorities, and that, provided replanning of local areas is carried out, these authorities should be given more autonomy. As a consequence the higher officials of the Ministry, instead of being largely occupied with routine administrative work, would have "more time for thinking and planning." Local authorities, at any rate, will applaud this advocacy of a diminution of the necessity continually to obtain sanction for their schemes. The need for enhancing the status of the Ministry by making the tenure of its political head more stable will win general approval; but Sir Arthur himself recognises that to place the direction of the Department, which apparently he believes desirable, under a non-political head, would be impracticable. He feels that it would not be possible to give to a single Ministry complete responsibility for health services (*e.g.*, merchant seamen, ex-Service men), but that co-ordination between departments could be both simpler and more efficient by the setting up of an inter-departmental committee consisting of the respective chief medical officers.

Since more responsibility for public health should be given to local authorities, it is necessary that they should be made more capable of undertaking it, many of them now being too small or too poor to exercise their powers satisfactorily. There is, however, a good deal to criticise in the machinery which Sir Arthur proposes. The country is to be divided into regional health areas, delimited in such a way as to make for the maximum standard of services. The county and county borough councils included in the area are to appoint a regional health council, which would include representatives of voluntary hospitals and other voluntary bodies, and which would have executive authority delegated to it. The objections to *ad hoc* bodies are well known, though they have their virtues; but a number of other questions arise in connection with an *ad hoc* body of this type. Could a constituent council be expected to incur expenditure decided upon against its wishes? Or could the representative of a voluntary hospital properly be allowed to vote for the spending of money by a public by whom he was not elected? There are obvious objections, also, to the suggestion that medical policy should be *decided* not by the Health Council but by a medical advisory committee consisting of medical officers of health and representatives of the medical staffs of voluntary hospitals and the British Medical Association.

All hospitals would come under the direction of the health council, or of a hospitals' regional council, but voluntary hospitals would continue to receive support from charity, patients' fees and contributions from the local authorities. So far as possible specialist services should be based upon hospitals.

The shortcomings of the Public Assistance and National Health Insurance medical services lead Sir Arthur to the conclusion that they should be merged into a comprehensive general practitioner service, forming part of the whole preventive and curative service, and available to all within existing National

Health Insurance income limits and their dependants. This conforms to the proposal of the Medical Planning Commission; but Sir Arthur suggests that, in place of the remainder of the population paying fees for medical attention, they might be included in a State system of voluntary insurance. The Beveridge plan for a comprehensive, compulsory insurance scheme will be thought by many to be a better foundation for a reformed health service than this part compulsory, part permissive basis.

The proposals for health centres in place of the individual doctor's surgery, at which midwifery, nursing and auxiliary services would be available, free choice of doctor, and the examination and, in some cases, treatment of mothers, babies and school children by general practitioners are those generally made.

Sir Arthur admits that the reforms he suggests are not ideal measures, but believes that, in view of possible post-war conditions and the conflict of competing needs, they are practicable and might reasonably win acceptance as a compromise between different opinions.

NORMAN WILSON

## Urban Planning and Public Opinion

### An American Survey.

THE Social Survey method which has for long been used mainly to study problems of poverty and unemployment has, since the war, found large-scale application to administrative problems in this country, and since the entry of the United States into the war a similar development has taken place there. In this country the Government created a special research unit for this purpose. In America government departments have used existing organisations, particularly in the field of public opinion measurement, to carry out surveys on specific problems.

"Urban Planning and Public Opinion"<sup>1</sup> gives an account of a survey which, it is believed, for the first time applies the Social Survey method, and in particular the Public Opinion Survey method to a problem of establishing general planning principles, although a study of the special problems of Birmingham, in which similar methods were used, was made in 1941.<sup>2</sup> A large inquiry with comparable aims, but with much wider scope, has since been made into some of the planning problems of Scotland by the War-time Social Survey working for the Department of Health for Scotland.

The American report claims that these studies have provided an "illustration of the importance of public opinion surveys in Urban Planning," and have demonstrated "that this mechanism permits a democratic determination of the attitudes, desires and resistances of those who live in cities toward planning problems and proposed solutions." The objectives of the survey are well expressed in general terms in the introduction to this report. "Although there is growing acknowledgment of the serious maladjustments confronting American municipalities and a gathering momentum for urban improvement during the post-war era, the vital role of the people is being too largely ignored. Plans are being discussed, studied and framed which involve the fortunes of large segments of the urban population; yet little has been done to discover what the people think and want with respect to their own communities. In a democratic nation, plans for city reorganisation can be neither realistic nor democratic unless they are based on a foundation of public opinion which accepts the purposes of these efforts and approves the general methods of accomplishment. The alternative is excessive governmental control—paternalistic or arbitrary."

<sup>1</sup> "Urban Planning and Public Opinion." By Melville C. Branch, Jr. (The Bureau of Urban Research, Princeton University, Princeton, N.Y.) September, 1942.

<sup>2</sup> "When We Build Again," a Bournville Village Trust Research Publication. (George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., London.) 1941.

## PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

The report further sets out to demonstrate the usefulness of the public opinion survey technique as an integral part of the technical development of plans and programmes for urban improvement in a community.

The method of the American survey was to take a sample of city dwellers covering the whole of the United States. This sample was a purposive one and was chosen to represent in their appropriate proportions the inhabitants of towns of different sizes, men and women of different economic status, of different age, education and religious affiliation. It was considered that the most important factors likely to influence opinion were accounted for in these categories, and the sample was considered to be representative of the whole population.

The method of selecting the sample is of interest because it is typical of the careful and scientific approach of this study and is in contrast to some studies made in this country in which this essential basis—a representative sample—has not been used.

The study was mainly concerned to test how far the method of the public opinion survey was a useful one in the field of urban planning. In order to demonstrate its usefulness the survey had a small number of limited objectives. The introduction to the report gives these as follows:—

“Do Americans who live in cities want to own their homes, or has the traditional desire for home ownership been modified in more recent years? Do the thirty or thirty-five million persons who reside in urban rental quarters prefer renting, or do they too look forward to an opportunity to acquire their own ‘fireside’? What improvements do city dwellers think will make their neighbourhood a better place in which to live? Are they satisfied with the municipal services and facilities now available in their locality? How frequently, by and large, do these people move within and between cities; is there a migrational momentum which awaits individual opportunity for fulfilment? To what extent do those who dwell in our cities travel long distances from their place of residence to their place of employment; would they like to live nearer work? How many take enough interest and concern in their community to vote in local municipal elections?”

The emphasis in these questions is a little different to what would have been expected in an English survey where standards of the local social services are much more uniform or in connection with problems of renting or owning houses where municipal housing is the rule rather than the exception. Problems of inter and intra-city migration are also different in this country from those in the U.S.A.

The method adopted was to use the interviewers of the American Institute of Public Opinion who interviewed the sample with a questionnaire to ensure that the questions were put to everyone in the same form.

Results showed that a majority wished to own their home as opposed to renting it, and showed that amongst those who already did own their home satisfaction was fairly general.

Where there was dissatisfaction with house ownership it was, in the main, a reflection of “urban blight”—a term now becoming general to describe the deterioration of a neighbourhood through age or other factors, or neighbourhood change.

It was found that nearly four-tenths had no desire for an improvement in their neighbourhood “to make it a better place to live in.” The remaining six-tenths made a very wide range of suggestions, the most important of which were directed towards improving the streets and side walks, or repairing and modernising buildings. An interesting contrast with English conditions is that only 2 per cent. suggested that there should be new houses or housing projects.

## REVIEWS

About two-thirds of the sample wished to continue living amongst the same sort of people as they were at present, a fact comparable with the Scottish survey, which also found that a majority of people wish to go on living in the same sort of neighbourhood as their present one. The American survey found that "neighbourhood social satisfaction" was highest in towns of from 5,000 to 25,000 inhabitants. The Scottish survey similarly found that the proportion of people who did not wish to change their neighbourhood was highest in small burghs. The same fact was reflected in the result that nearly three-fifths of city dwellers showed no desire to move either within their city or to some other place.

The survey also studied the relation of the home to the place of work and showed how the distance varied with city size, a feature also found in the Scottish study, although American distances were on the whole greater.

This difference in distance as well as in standard of living is also reflected in the mode of transport, for whereas the most important group of the American sample went to work in an automobile, the largest percentage of the Scottish sample walked or cycled. Similarly, the time taken on the American worker's journey to his job was much greater than that of the Scottish workers.

The American survey also showed that migration between cities and within a city is a much more important feature of American life than it is in this country.

A further question asked what was the most important problem facing cities to-day? The range of subjects was very large, but housing was considered most important by the highest percentage—16 per cent.—and transportation most important by the next highest percentage—8 per cent.

Questions which had special reference to the possibility of control by the city government showed that two-thirds thought that the arrangement of all buildings and streets in a rebuilding scheme should be controlled by the local municipal government, whereas one-third thought that it should be left to the individual owners, and again of those who were able to express definite opinions two-thirds considered that the city government should replace the poorest housing in their municipality with better homes even though it meant higher taxes for everyone. It was found that approval for municipal slum clearance was highest in large cities, and here it was 65 per cent.

The final section of the inquiry was concerned with participation in city elections. It was found that 55 per cent. participate in this local government activity.

The success of this survey, with its limited objects and strictly scientific approach, has demonstrated that even in a country of 140,000,000 people many of the general principles of urban planning can be deduced from small surveys and answers can be given to problems of this type fairly quickly. It follows, therefore, that in solving problems of town and country planning the social survey should be part of a synthetic study to which the architects, economists, geographers and administrators make their special contributions.

This study is but one example of the usefulness of the survey method of solving the problems of administration—in this country the method has been successfully applied to problems of rationing, nutrition, education, agriculture, fuel consumption, transport, public health and of consumer needs.

DENNIS CHAPMAN.

## Administrative Regulation

*A Study in Representation of Interests.* By AVERY LEISERSON. University of Chicago Press. Cambridge University Press.

THIS thorough examination of the difficult question of the desirability of allowing representatives of group interests to participate in the exercise of administra-

tive authority forms a valuable counterpart to more numerous studies of the activities of pressure groups among political and legislative bodies. In selecting the subject and in devoting to it so painstaking an analysis, Mr. Leiserson has made a notable contribution to the literature of public administration. It is a work which will add renown to the already notable series of "Studies in Public Administration" of the University of Chicago Press of which it forms Volume XIII. The subject of the book is one which certainly stands in need of clarification. Some notable successes of the comparatively recent device of appointing advisory committees in limited fields of administrative activity have stimulated suggestions for its extension, which have shown scant regard for the appropriateness or practical possibility of its wider application in different contexts.

Mr. Leiserson approaches the problem by first seeking a classification of the various administrative powers in order to see which are likely to be appropriate fields for participation by "interests" and their representatives. Two main groups of such powers are identified; those predominantly judicial and those mainly of a legislative character. The *judicial* powers are powers of summary decision (as by public health officers, postal censors, etc.), enabling or licensing powers, dispensing powers and directing powers. All four subdivisions of these predominantly administrative acts are, Mr. Leiserson contends, best exercised by neutral public agency. Any permissible advocacy of group interests should occur in accordance with procedural forms which that agency should establish. A threefold division of the predominantly *legislative* administrative activities is proposed. Investigatory powers or examining powers, in which there can be no other loyalty than to their statutory standards, do not lend themselves to interest participation. As Mr. Leiserson points out, the "advocate" psychology and method is a disqualification for persons responsible for making administrative investigations.

More opportunity for the participation of group interests occurs when rule-making powers are involved. In some isolated examples this participation can go a very long way. Mr. Leiserson reports that "the interpenetration of function between the (Interstate Commerce) Commission and the American Railway Association in the fields of safety and car-service regulation in a sense almost seemed to make the latter an administrative agency of the Commission." Here, as often, it is the substantive content of policy for which responsibility is shared by group interests with public authority, but it is always the latter official body which must assume sole responsibility for final promulgation of the orders made.

When it has been agreed that group representatives should be brought into the administrative structure it remains to determine how they are to be selected and the extent of the appointing officer's discretion. Illustrative examples are provided taken from American and also British experience, in the course of which the author raises his eyebrows at the mode of selection adopted to constitute the London Passenger Transport Board.

Both on this question and on the topic of the attitude of organised groups towards representation in administrative agencies, Mr. Leiserson makes it quite clear that he is fully aware of the pitfalls and difficulties to which they give rise. He is equally cool and reserved on the subject of representative advisory committees upon whose operation a good deal of optimism has been manifest in recent years. For Mr. Leiserson such advisory bodies are no panacea for the solution of all the toughest administrative tasks. Critical detachment is certainly not out of place, but in this aspect of the discussion Mr. Leiserson might have dealt more fully with the positive and constructive contribution which representative participation can provide. It is evident that Mr. Leiserson is aware of the work of Miss Follett, but despite his recognition of the fact that "the repre-



sentative committee is a part of the process not only of investigation but of social and political change," he cannot be said to have done justice to the philosophy of "integrative" co-operation which she so brilliantly expounded.

On the more concrete side there is much less cause for criticism. British readers will think of the relevant British experience, particularly of the consultative committees now attached to several Government departments, although Mr. Leiserson's illustrative examples are naturally chosen from American experience. Here more light might usefully have been shed upon the subject of special representation of consumers' interests. The consumer research movement is an American invention, and although it may be true that it has been too often "organised around the intellectual interests of scattered individuals," it has not been without influence in both national and local government—despite the equal truth that consumers have benefited more by competitive action of powerful producer organisations in forcing down utility rates and commodity prices than by their own efforts.

Among the points of principle raised in the work may be noticed the dynamic standpoint taken by the author. Hence the reference to politics as "a continuous process of introducing an uncertain stability into a constant complex of non-rational social forces." Hence also his criticism of the whole "concept of integration between public authority and private interests" on the ground that it "implies that the process of change will be of a conservative rather than a revolutionary character." The fact that "the concept of interest representation is based upon the principle of a continuity with the past rather than faith in the efficiency of a legislative utopia" is referred to as leading to difficulties which are "dishearteningly obvious."

The final chapter, "The Dilemmas of Interest Representation," makes some good points, but as its title shows, hardly attempts a summing up of the work as a whole in the light of any new political principles. Every reader will perform this for himself in proportion to the extent of his philosophic interests. Some may, for instance, like to ask themselves whether Mr. Leiserson does not offer chapter and verse illustrations for the view of the late Professor R. G. Collingwood that "being civilised means living so far as possible dialectically, that is, in constant endeavour to convert every occasion of non-agreement into an occasion of agreement," and so of cutting down the (inevitable) employment of force in human society.

Without however raising any such questions it is still possible to learn much from Mr. Leiserson's solid contribution to one of the critical aspects of administrative technique of our time.

F. R. C.

## World Order in Historical Perspective

By HANS KOHN. Cambridge, Mass. Harvard University Press, London, 1942. Sir Humphrey Milford. 16s. 6d.

A SHORT exposition of the underlying principles at stake during the years of fearful crisis through which we are passing, based upon a wide reading in the fields of historical and political science. Professor Kohn brings out clearly the fundamental clash between the motives and outlook animating Germany and Japan and the temper of the disunited and bewildered democratic States. He considers that the real struggle is between America and the Axis, although he pays a handsome tribute to the resolute stand made by Great Britain in 1940, and attributes to it the decisive influence in shattering the boasted Nazi and

Fascist "wave of the future." The Nazi opportunity was presented by "the situation of crisis" which is nowhere very clearly defined, but is explained as a result of the historical development of the dynamism of the forces of democracy, industrial technology and naturalism, a theme to which, as the publisher's amendment shows, Professor Kohn has already devoted some previous works.

Beyond insistence, little more than platitudinous, upon the doctrine that our survival depends upon the emergence of world order out of world chaos, Professor Kohn has no very positively defined programme for the future. He finds an example of "the vision which alone can overcome this crisis and assure recovery" in the offer of fusion with France made by Great Britain in June 1940 and rejected by the French a few days before the collapse of France. His careful analysis of the recent past, amply documented by an appendix full of notes and references (which have some surprising omissions, *e.g.*, Professor Madariaga), nevertheless enforces a lesson which will not be lost upon an attentive reader. A special word of praise is due to the Harvard University Press for achieving a notably legible page thanks, it would seem, largely to the shorter line of type employed.

### Speeches and Documents in American History

Vol. IV. 1914-1939. Selected and Edited by Robert Birley. World's Classics Series. Oxford University Press. London: Humphrey Milford. 1942. 3s.

THIS useful collection contrives to pack a number of striking documents and pronouncements within its 300 small pages. Fairly divided between home and foreign affairs, they range from President Wilson's speech on American neutrality of 19th August, 1914, to President Franklin Roosevelt's broadcast on the same theme of 3rd September, 1939. Students of public administration will be grateful for the numerous documents on domestic affairs which include the gist of the Volstead Act, 1919, the Agricultural Adjustment Act, 1933, the Tennessee Valley Act, 1933, the Social Security Act, 1935, and notable court decisions such as the *Schechter Poultry Corporation v. United States*, 1935, the *United States v. Butler*, *et. al.*, 1936, and the *West Coast Hotel v. Parrish*, 1937.

The editor has contributed useful introductory notes and a still more useful "Glossary of American Politics," which briefly elucidates mysteries such as mugwumps, copperheads, pork barrels, granger laws, favorite sons, which are encountered in the text.

## Pamphlets

### The Nation's Land

By LEWIS SILKIN, M.P., L.C.C. (Fabian Research Series No. 70.) 6d.

MR. SILKIN'S argument is as follows: that the growing public interest in the land question; the determination to seize the opportunities afforded by enemy destruction; the new appreciation of the necessity for preserving good agricultural land from the ravages of the speculative builder; all these demand a policy of nationalisation of urban areas, and effective powers of control over the future development of agricultural land.

Having summarised the powers presently held by various planning authorities, Mr. Silkin points out that "over 97 per cent. of the area of Great Britain there is no effective town planning control." The causes of this remarkable state of affairs are parochialism in conception of existing powers and of planning authorities, inadequacy of the powers conferred on planning authorities, inhibiting effect on authorities of liability for compensation to owners.

Summarising the reports of the Barlow Commission and the Scott and Uthwatt Committees, Mr. Silkin considers that the powers which it is suggested should be conferred on the Minister for National Development—or whatever his title may be—are so limited as to produce frustration and delay. Certainly, in view of the tenuous efforts of Sir William Jowitt, there is something to be said for endowing the ministerial architect of Better Britain with something stronger than good intentions. On other points, too, Mr. Silkin considers that the Reports err on the side of timidity.

For him, "the only satisfactory solution is nationalisation of all land in urban areas." If this is not done the planners of the "blitzed" area at Coventry, for example, will first have to deal with the legal and financial problems arising out of 1,000 separate ownerships. With what energy they have left, they may then start planning. Clearly, such preliminary obstacles in all bombed areas would result in impossible delays and evasions. The writer quotes Lord Astor, who said:—

"Public ownership of land in a city is vital to its replanning. Hitler has given 'blitzed' towns an unexpected chance which the Government must not spoil by lack of vision and courage. Parliament should demand immediate legislation, otherwise vested interests will soon diminish our prospects of the best results."

The land question is one that will be on the nation's agenda in the not too distant future. Mr. Silkin is spokesman for an important body of opinion, and his pamphlet deserves close study and discussion. Even those who disagree with his conclusions will nevertheless find merit in his arguments.

### Will the War make us Poorer?

By MICHAEL YOUNG and SIR HENRY N. BUNBURY. (Oxford Pamphlets on Home Affairs, No. H.5.) 6d.

WAR makes clear the fact that wealth consists in natural resources and productive efficiency. In this effective pamphlet the authors are considering this "real" wealth, and, to the question posed by their title give a firm and

emphatic negative. We shall not be poorer—provided we have good organisation. This "organisation" is not defined, but such definition lies outside of the scope of this pamphlet. A considerable service is rendered in that wealth is clearly described and "the dangerous doctrines which clouded the years after the last war" disposed of. Such clarification is still very necessary.

It is made clear that our wealth, counted in terms of food, clothing, shelter, is sufficient for our basic needs. Certain demands may have to be deferred to the needs of re-equipment, rebuilding, and so on. By means of the tremendous advance of our productivity a happier and fuller life is possible. Given efficient management of the National Debt, presumably management not hypnotised by its astronomical proportions, and effective currency control, the monetary bogey may be laid. What is implied by such control is not made clear, and the question is dismissed as too technical for discussion.

A word is said in passing on the function of production committees, during the war, in promoting a sense of co-operative effort. "Given wise attitudes and policies on the part of managements" the gains achieved in war-time in efficiency and welfare need not be lost. This is perhaps too wide an assumption. In war-time, communal necessity makes this co-operation possible. Mere organisational forms will not have the same unifying effect in peace-time unless the feeling of communal necessity can still be generated. By what means can this be done? This question will not be decided in an academic way. Perhaps this is why the question remains unanswered.

Poverty and hardship have not, for many years, been indices of deficiencies of resources, nor have they indicated "bad" organisation as such. If "good" organisation is all that is necessary, the questions still remain: what kind of "good" organisation and in whose interests? Who will be the organisers and who the organised?

The authors have not answered these questions. They have, however, given an effective reply to the prophets of woe and pessimism who call on us to expect an era of progressive belt-tightening.

## English Law

By J. L. BRIERLY. (Oxford Pamphlets on Home Affairs, No. H.6.) 6d. net. PROFESSOR BRIERLY presents a lucid and popular description of the English legal system. He has nothing to say that has not been said before, but he writes more interestingly than most others who have attempted the task.

Particularly welcome is the section on "The Legal Profession." There have been many essays on our judges, their history, status, and so forth. But Professor Brierly's description of the origin and functions of solicitors and barristers has the merit of focussing attention on forces which tend to be overlooked by the student whose attention is attracted by the more dramatic scene of executive-judicial struggle. In fact, Professor Brierly has drawn attention to an "old despotism."

There are defects in the English legal system. It is still too costly and too slow. These are remediable, Professor Brierly points out, though lawyers as a class have not been distinguished for proposing reforms. But reform would not appear to coincide with professional vested interests. Waste of money and time are, however, not caused by basic defects. But it is a basic defect that English law is concerned "not with social righteousness, but with individual rights."

This pamphlet deserves a wide public, and should be presented to all interested representatives of the United Nations presently enjoying our hospitality.

## The British Way in Local Rule

By GUY HUNTER, B.A. (Craig and Wilson, Glasgow.) 63 pp. Price 1s.

THIS is the eighth of a series of booklets on "The British Way." The preceding seven were written by members of various faculties in the Scottish universities. This is a new activity from which it may be deduced that the impact of great events stimulates the sense of civic responsibility of teachers as well as of wide masses of formerly inert laymen.

Mr. Hunter's particular task is to describe, sympathetically and critically, the past and present of British local government, and to express some hopes for the future. This he does with refreshing enthusiasm. The criticisms that he utters are mild compared to those which might have been forthcoming had he been in touch with the personnel of town and county councils to-day.

The efficiency of local authorities can only be measured in terms of specific activities, and, by this test, high praise and sharp condemnation are both inspired. To put the question thus is to render a valuable service to the confused but willing citizen-student.

Readers of PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION will not find much to disagree with in Mr. Hunter's estimate of the achievements of British local government. As to the future he would prefer larger authorities for planning and financial purposes, with actual execution in the hands of small authorities.

Rightly, he stresses the immense reserves of civic enthusiasm and energy which the war has revealed by way of the civil defence services. The problem is to generate such energy in the absence of inspiring danger.

The Labour Party Report on the Reform of Local Government said nothing about staffing. Mr. Hunter does not overlook this important question. But we might as well ask Mr. Hunter, as the latest exponent of this view, to adduce some proof that university graduates have a greater flair for organisation and administration than any other educational group having a reasonable standard of literacy. This is not to object to the admission of graduates to the Service, or to the attendance at universities of local government officers, both excellent measures. But the best results of this mixture will not be obtained if there is an *a priori* assumption of superiority by any group. Graduates should rely on their individual merits.

Pamphlets of this kind would be welcomed by many Army units at home and abroad. Perhaps I.P.A. members can help in this.

## Current Pamphlets of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs

THE three pamphlets on review have this in common, that a traveller, judging by the attractive covers, would lift them off the railway bookstall as suitable reading for a tedious journey. Since such pamphlets aim at popularising important questions an attractive exterior is half the battle won. British pamphleteers, with the exception of one political party, have something to learn in this matter.

### (1) *How We Govern Ourselves*, by G. V. Ferguson.

It is inevitable that much of this pamphlet will seem very familiar to British readers. The British North America Act of 1861, on which Canada's Government is founded, was, naturally, strongly and desirably influenced by its parentage. The interesting feature is the existence of the one federal and nine provincial governments. The author is not too happy about this division of responsibility. It is clear that important issues such as housing, unemployment and health have not received the concentrated attention which they have merited. It is clear, also, that constitutional difficulties have been made use of by the



## PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

opponents of governmental action. The British North America Act "is subject to interpretation in the courts, and the interpretation, over a period of seventy years, has, in the opinion of many, defeated the aims of the Fathers of Confederation." This is very similar to the drama of President Roosevelt, the American Constitution, the New Deal, and the Supreme Court.

There is no House of Lords in Canada, but there is a Second Chamber—the Senate. With rude candour we are told, "To be a Senator, a citizen must own real property to the value of at least four thousand dollars, free of all encumbrances." It is an honest country that does not disguise vital facts as traditions, justify privilege by philosophy, or present an undemocratic institution as being harmless but nice.

- (2) *Behind the Headlines*. (Published jointly with the Canadian Association for Adult Education.) Vol. 3, No. 2, *Family Allowances for Canada?* 1943. By D. H. Stepler. 32 pp., 10 cents.

This booklet is a discussion on familiar lines. Much British material is quoted on the subject of poverty and malnutrition. The author regards family allowances as part of an adequate system of social security, and as necessary in order to arrest population decline. Sir William Beveridge's Report is frequently quoted, an index of what Canada expects of Britain.

Helpful questions for group discussion are provided as well as a useful reading list. This pamphlet is better than any that we have hitherto found on family allowances.

- (3) *Behind the Headlines*, Vol. 3, No. 5, 1943. *Homes orhovels?* Edited by Anthony Adamson. 48 pp., 10 cents.

This is "a summary of an exchange of authoritative Canadian views on the problems of house-building and to a lesser extent community planning."

This pamphlet is certainly well-planned. Architects, officials, trade unionists and politicians appear and speak their pieces in Part I. Part II is an address by Dr. Catherine Bauer which, though not part of the preceding discussion, serves to give cohesion thereto. Part III is "An A B C of the housing problem for Canadians, with some useful knowledge on the ways and means of its solution both in Canada and other countries." Then follows a series of questions and answers, simple but adequate.

Again, as in the last pamphlet, what is believed to be the British tendency dominates the thoughts of the various speakers. The Scott and Uthwatt Reports are evidently taken very seriously in Canada.

The illustrations are excellent. In fact, again, one is tempted to describe this as the best pamphlet of its kind to date.

J. S. COVENTRY.

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